



Vol. 618 Rs. 25

Birbal to the Rescue



BIRBAL TO THE RESCUE

The wit and wisdom of Birbal had endeared him not only to Akbar, but also to a vast majority of the subjects of the Mughal empire. He had the rare distinction of achieving immense popularity during his lifetime, next only to that of Akbar. He was a good administrator, a good soldier and perhaps what pleased Akbar the most—a good jester. Less known is the fact that he was also a good poet. He wrote under the pen-name, "Brahma" and a collection of his poems is preserved in the Bharatpur Museum.

Though popularly known as Birbal, his real name was Maheshdas. It is believed that he belonged to a poor brahmin family of Trivikrampur (now known as Tikawanpur) on the banks of the River Yamuna. But it was only by virtue of his sharp intellect that he rose to be a minister at the court of Akbar. His phenomenal success made many courtiers jealous of him and if the popular accounts are to be believed, they were ever busy plotting against him. According to popular legend even his death, while he was on an expedition to Afghanistan at the head of a large military force, was due to treachery. Though he was killed in the battle, the expedition was successful and subdued the turbulent province.

Akbar was so deeply moved, when he heard the news of Birbal's death, that he burst forth into a couplet and lamented, "Birbal, you never hurt the helpless. You always gave them whatever you had. I am helpless now and yet you have left nothing for me."

Akbar had found in Birbal a true friend and sympathiser. Of the handful of followers of the Din-e-Elahi, the new faith preached by Akbar, there was only one Hindu, Birbal.

Script:
Meera Ugra

Illustrations:
Ram Waeerkar

AMAR CHITRA KATHA:
The Route to Your Roots
Over 78 million copies have been sold so far

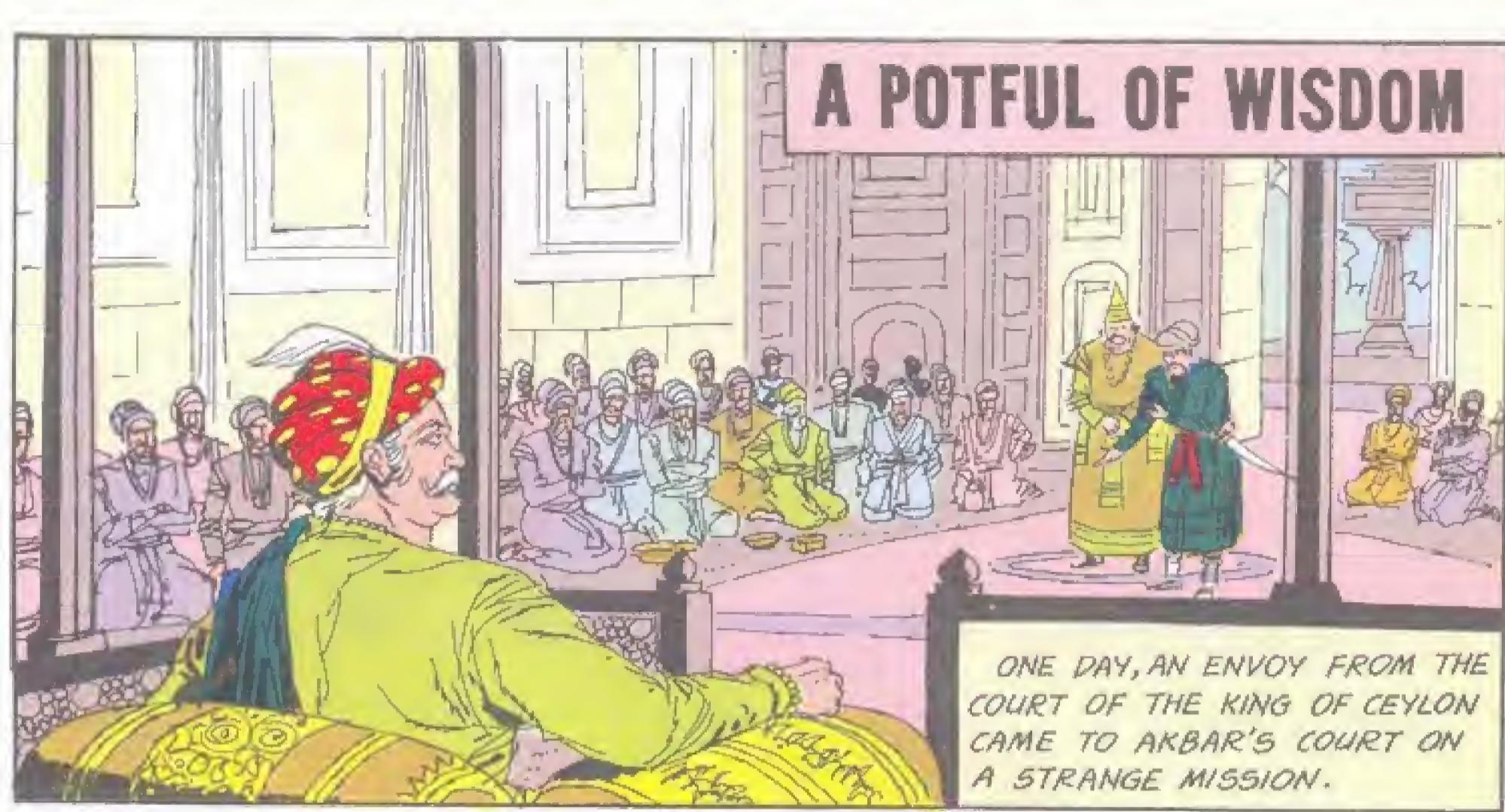
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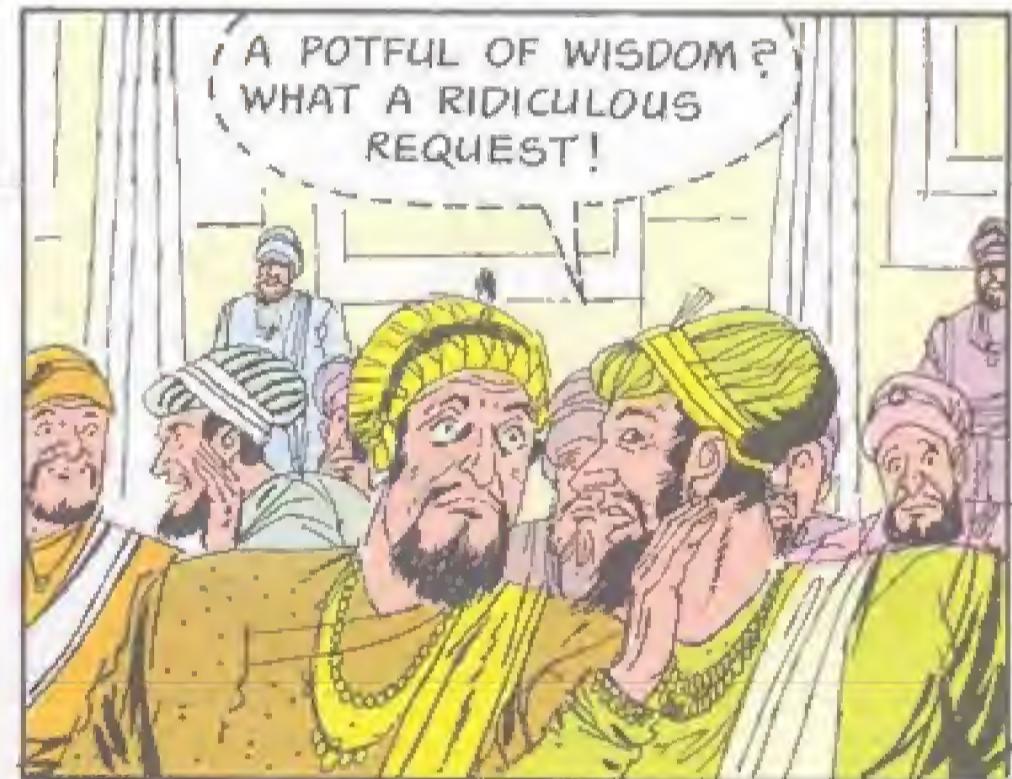
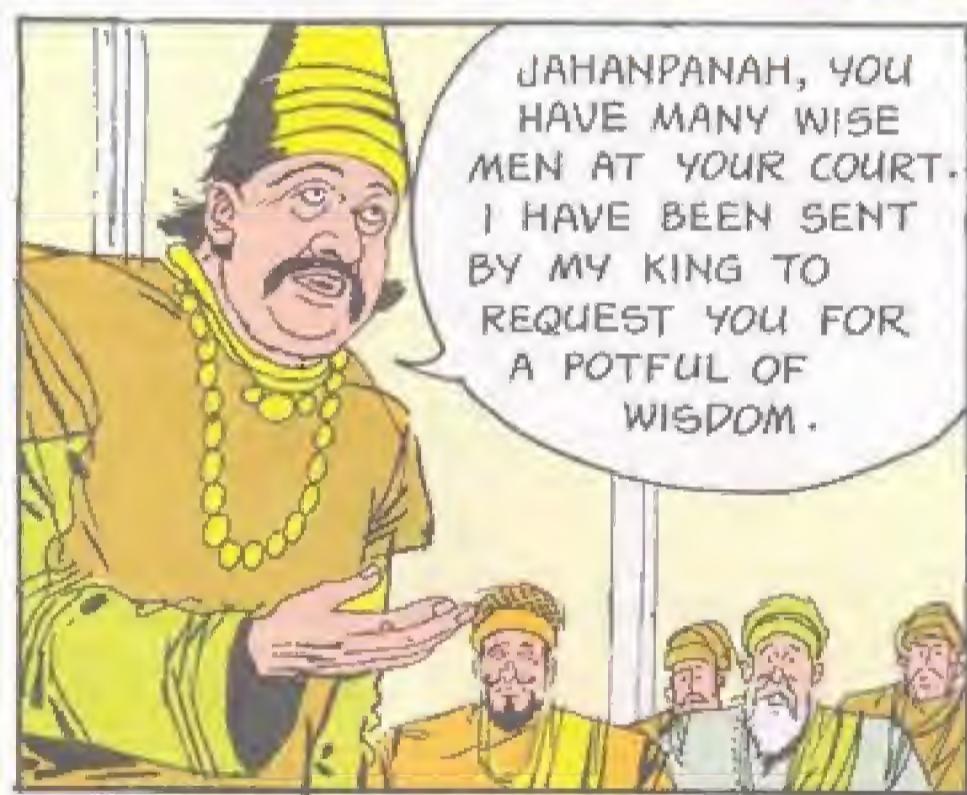
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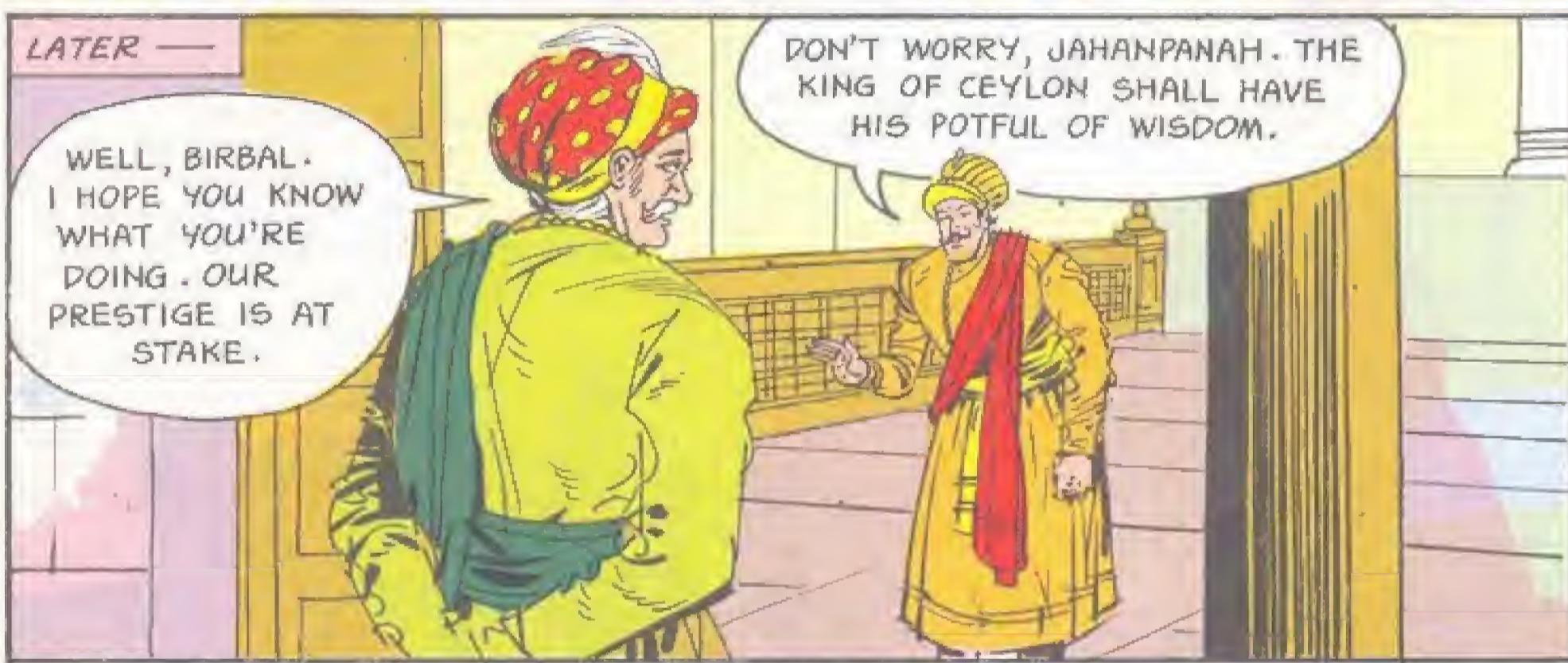
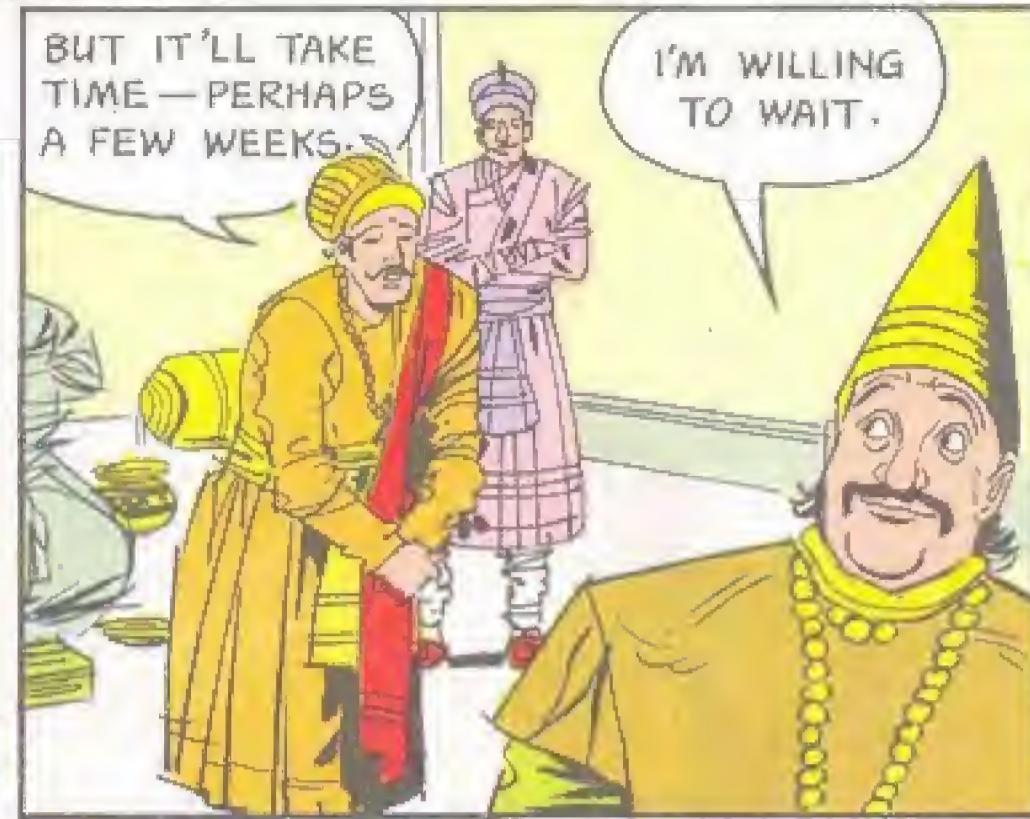
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A POTFUL OF WISDOM



ONE DAY, AN ENVOY FROM THE COURT OF THE KING OF CEYLON CAME TO AKBAR'S COURT ON A STRANGE MISSION.





AT THE PUMPKIN PATCH —

GIVE ME ONE
OF THOSE
POTS.



BIRBAL CAREFULLY
PLACED THE POT
OVER A PUMPKIN
FLOWER.

NOW PLACE THE
OTHER POTS IN
THE SAME
MANNER.



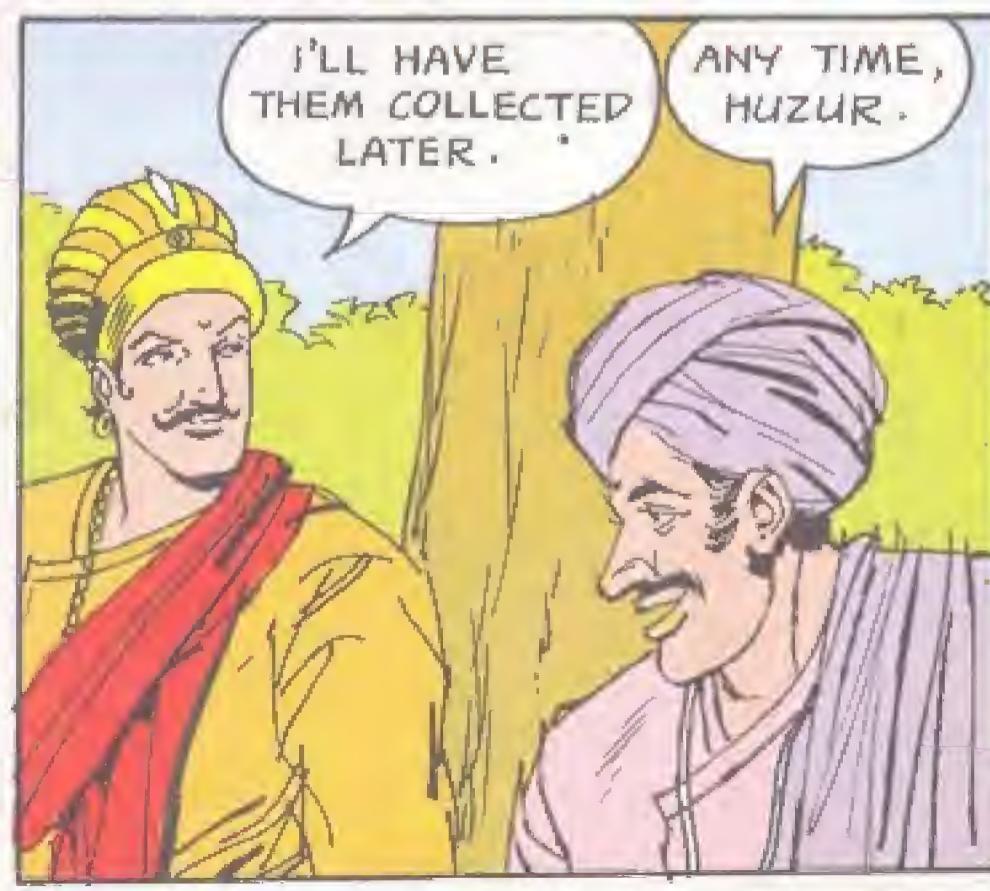
WHEN THE ATTENDANT
FINISHED PLACING THE
LAST POT —

KEEP AN EYE ON
THESE, AND DON'T
LET THEM BE
MOVED.



I'LL HAVE
THEM COLLECTED
LATER.

ANY TIME,
HUZUR.

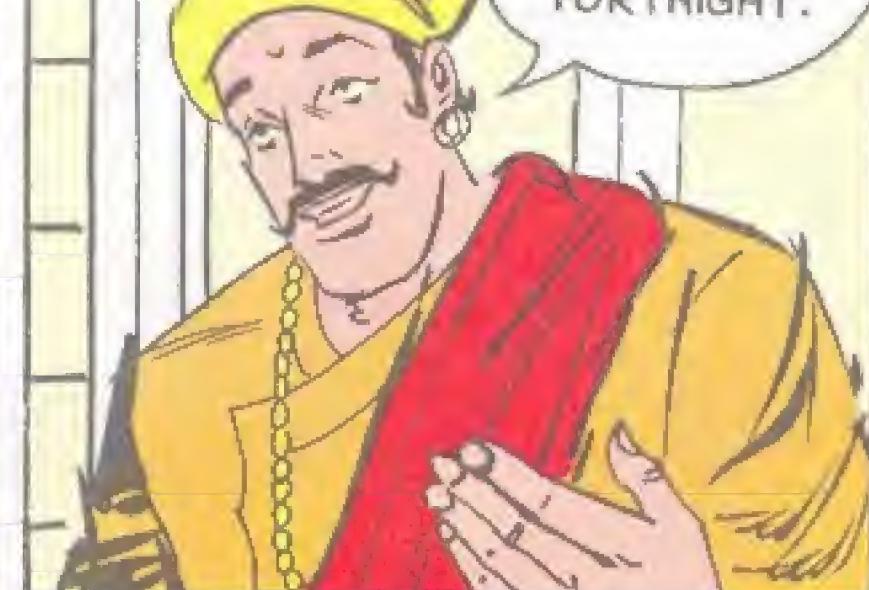


A FEW WEEKS LATER —

HAVE YOU MADE
ANY PROGRESS,
BIRBAL?

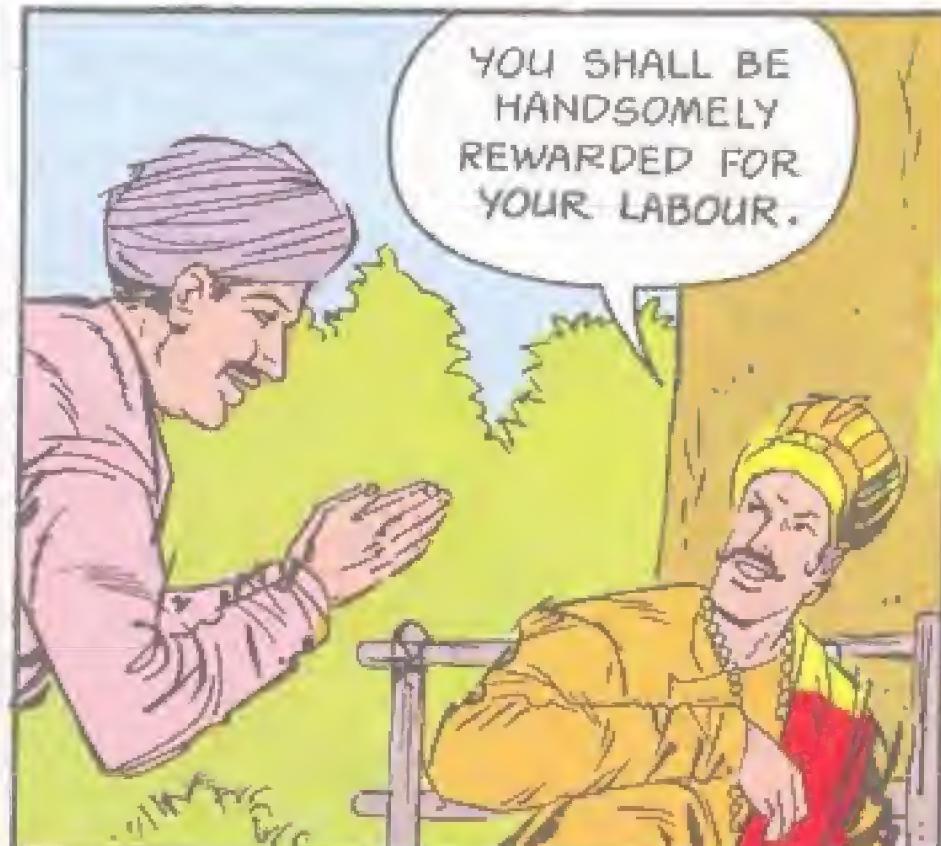
YES, JAHANPANAH.
I'M ALMOST
THROUGH WITH
THE TASK.

I SHOULD BE
ABLE TO HAVE
THE POT FILLED
IN... SAY... A
FORTNIGHT.



A FORTNIGHT LATER —

AHA — NOW
THEY ARE
ALMOST AS
BIG AS THE
POTS! GOOD!

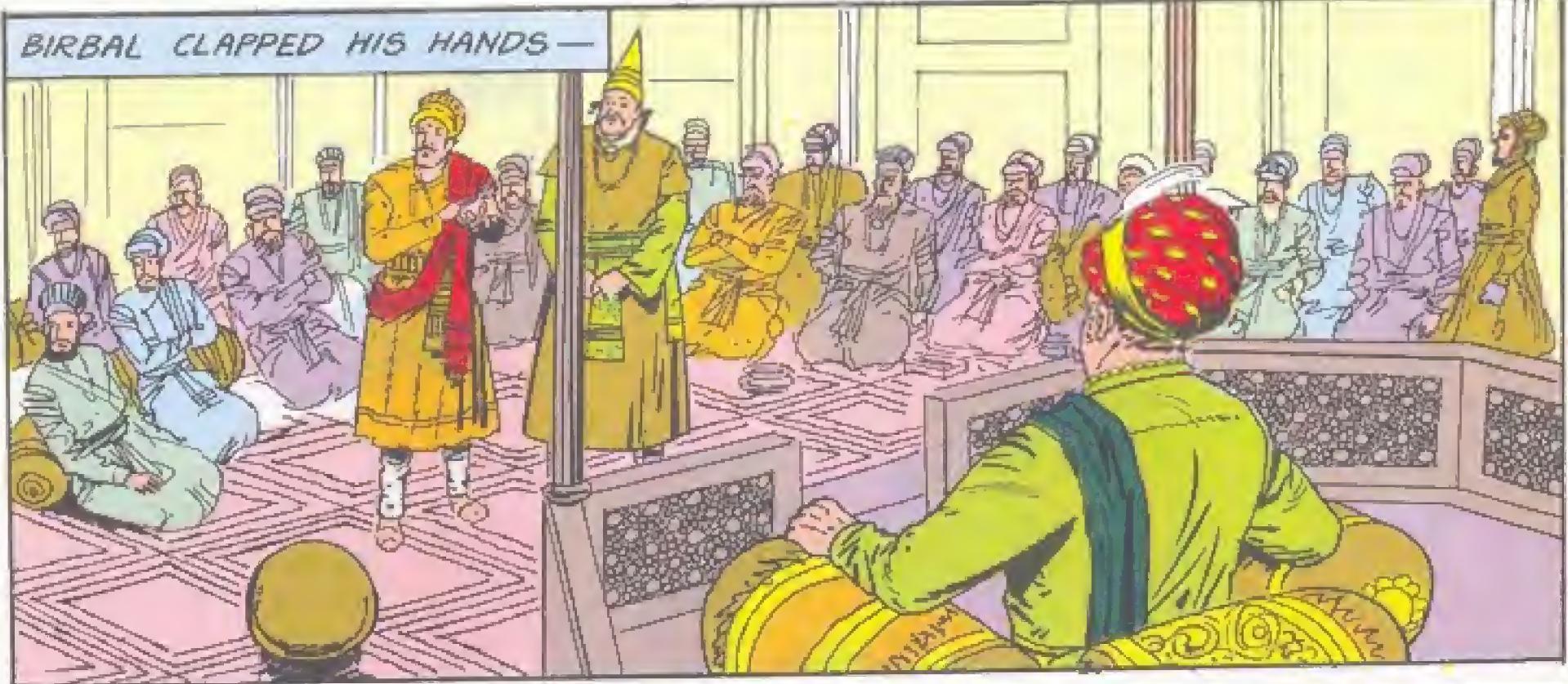


LATER BIRBAL HAD THE ENVOY SUMMONED
TO COURT.

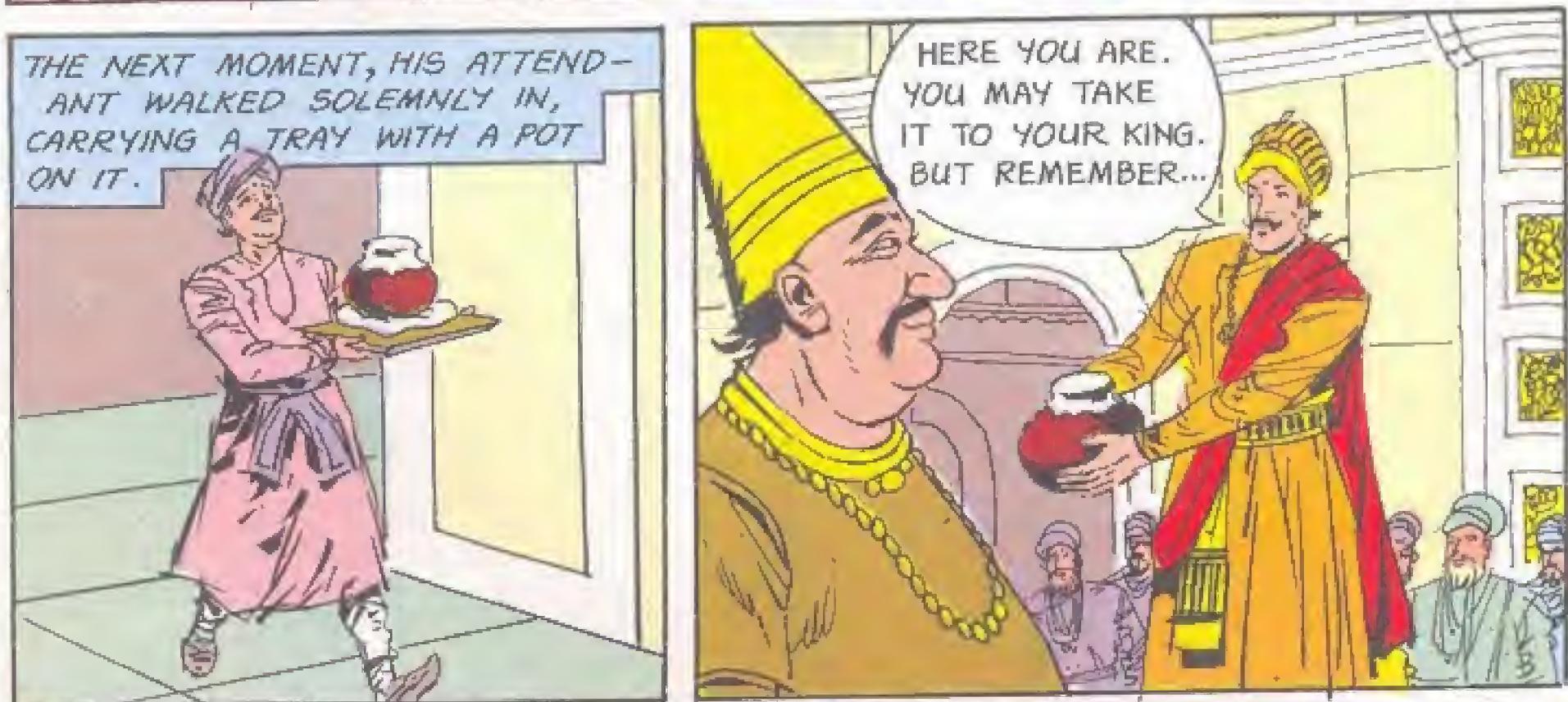
THE POTFUL OF
WISDOM IS READY,
JAHANPANAH.



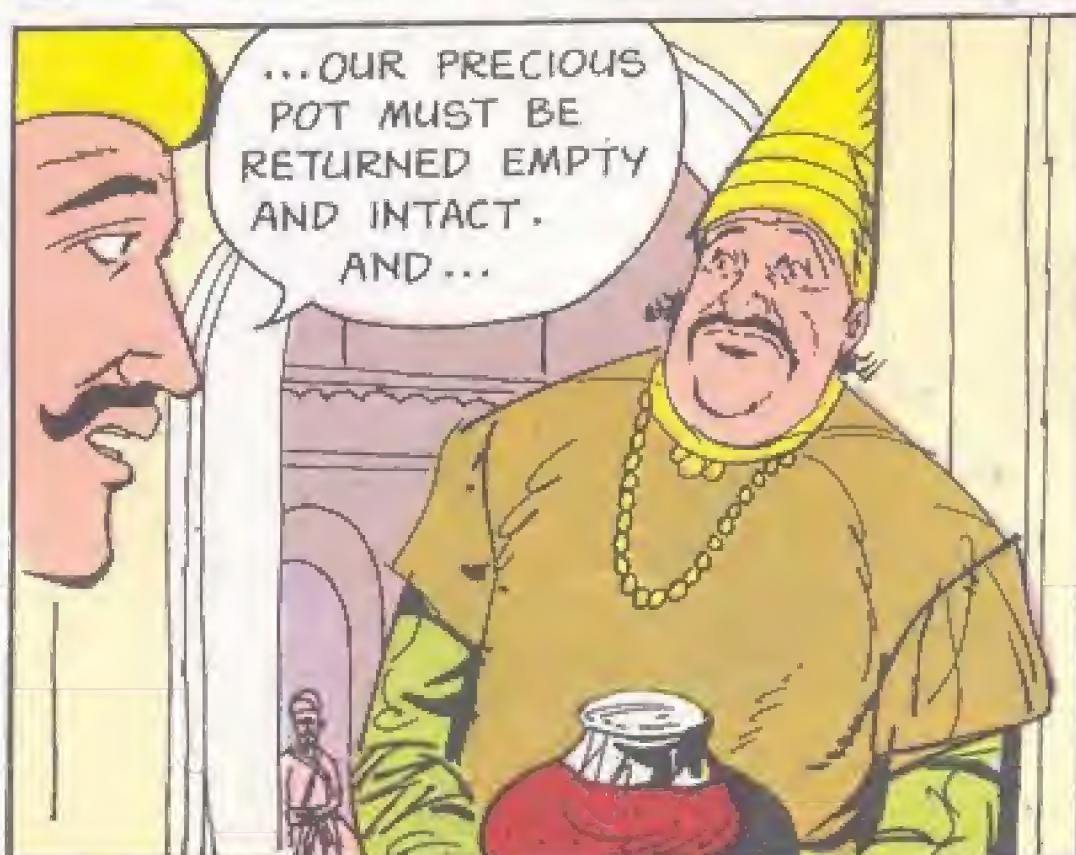
BIRBAL CLAPPED HIS HANDS —



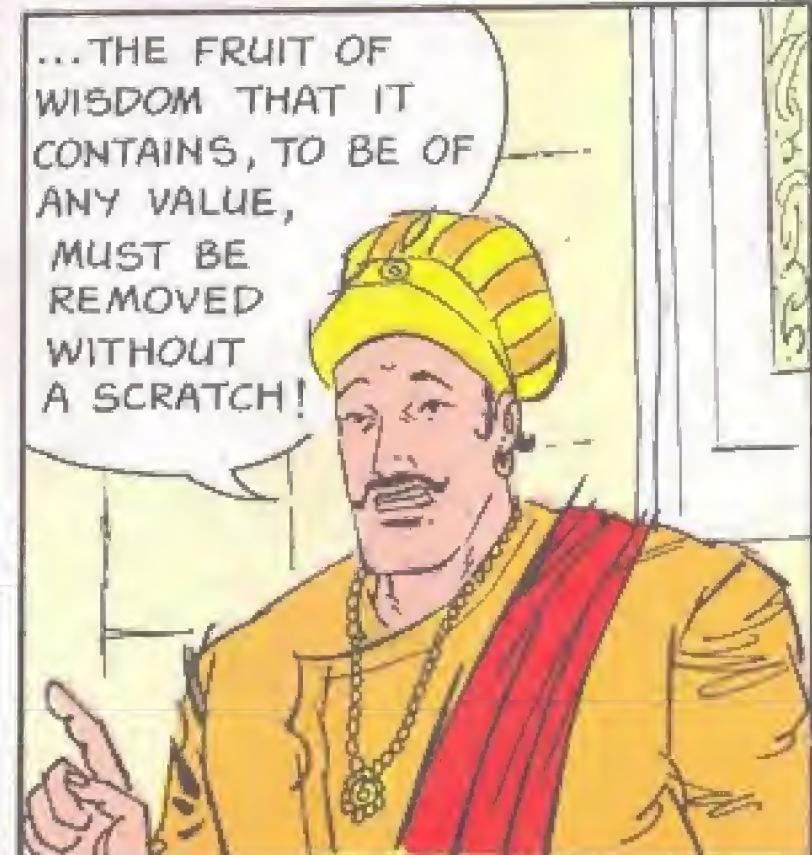
THE NEXT MOMENT, HIS ATTENDANT WALKED SOLEMNLY IN, CARRYING A TRAY WITH A POT ON IT.



HERE YOU ARE.
YOU MAY TAKE
IT TO YOUR KING.
BUT REMEMBER...



...THE FRUIT OF WISDOM THAT IT CONTAINS, TO BE OF ANY VALUE, MUST BE REMOVED WITHOUT A SCRATCH!



MAY I HAVE
A LOOK AT IT?

CERTAINLY.

WE HAVE FIVE
MORE, IF YOUR
KING NEEDS
ANY MORE
WISDOM.

WE ARE NO MATCH
FOR BIRBAL. WHY
DID WE EVER
TRY!

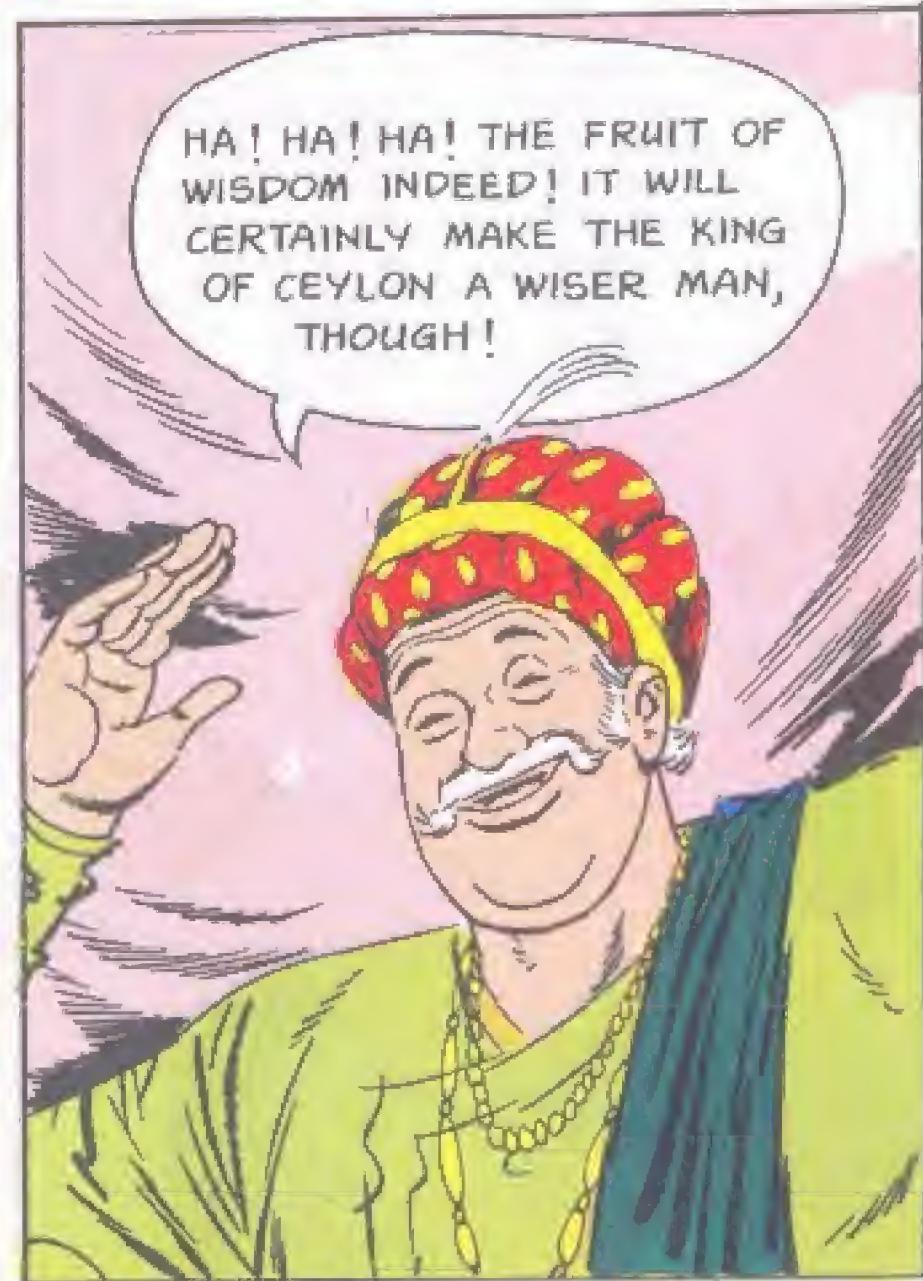
AS SOON AS THE ENVOY LEFT—

BIRBAL, I AM CURIOUS
TO HAVE A LOOK AT
THE FRUIT OF WISDOM.
YOU SAID YOU HAVE
FIVE MORE.

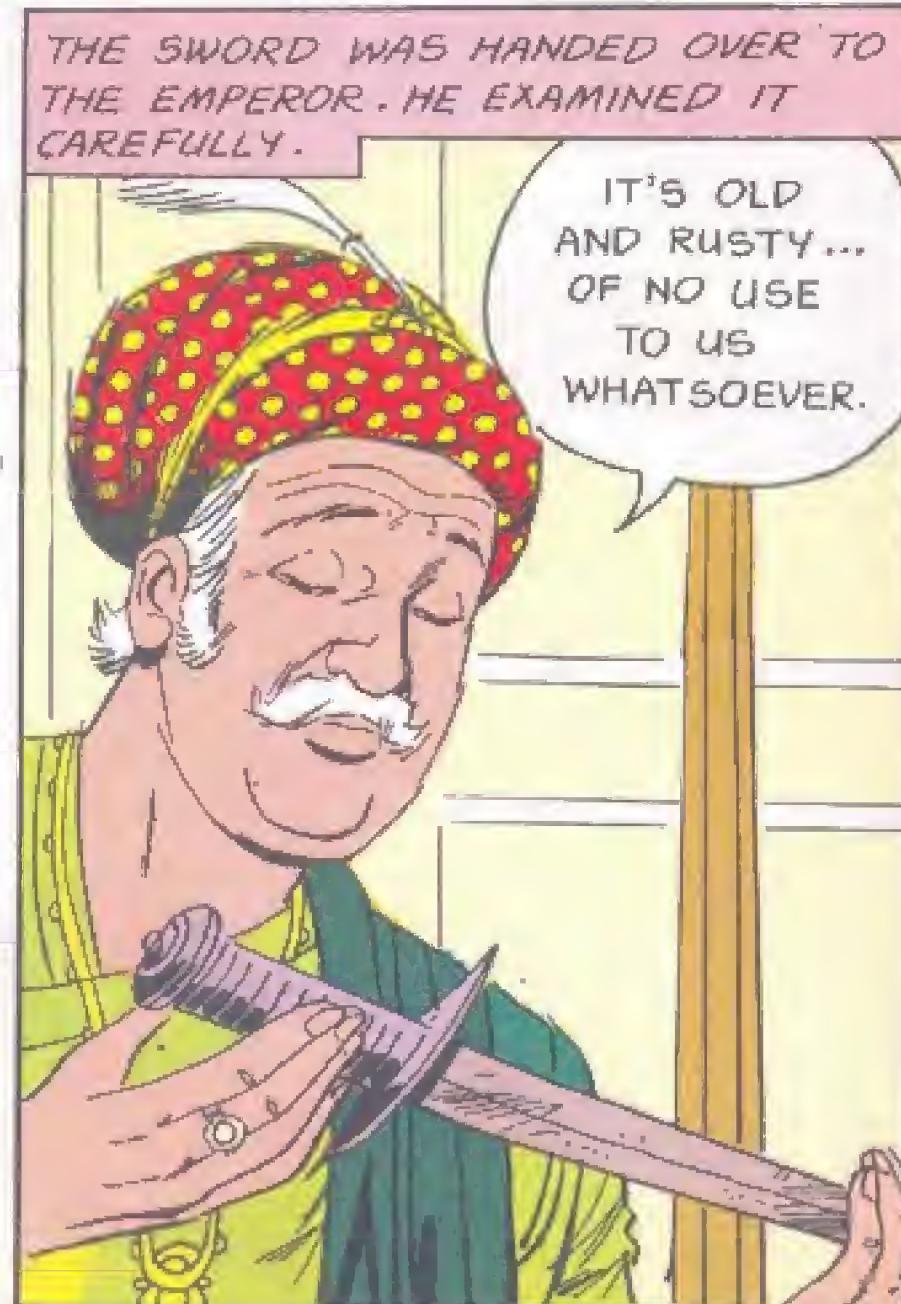
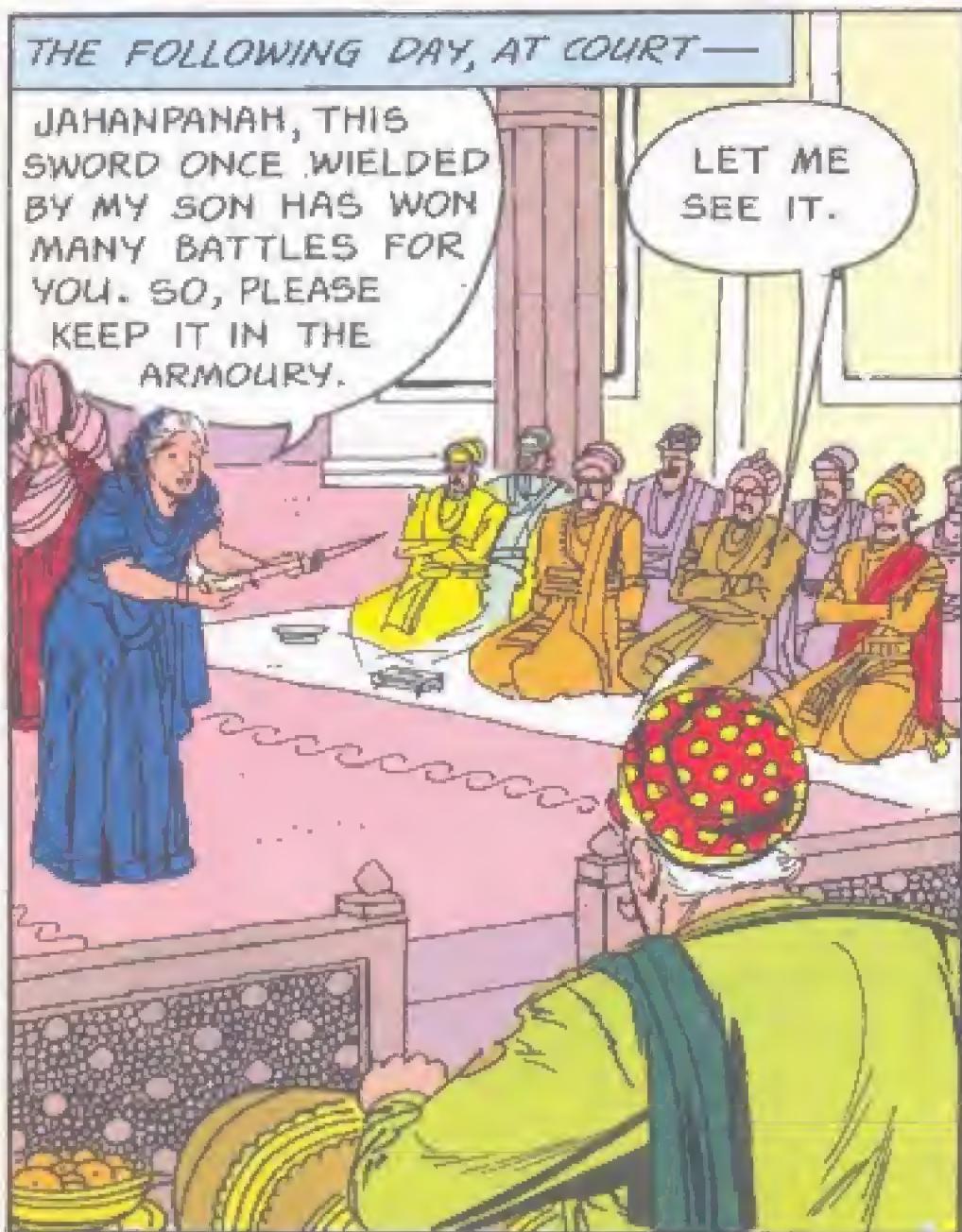
I'LL HAVE
THEM SENT TO
YOU, JAHAN-
PANAH.



WHEN THE OTHER POTS WERE BROUGHT,
AKBAR LOOKED INTO ONE OF THEM...



THE EMPEROR'S TOUCH



HE GAVE THE SWORD TO AN ATTENDANT.

RETURN IT TO HER
AND GIVE HER FIVE
GOLD COINS FOR
HER TROUBLE.

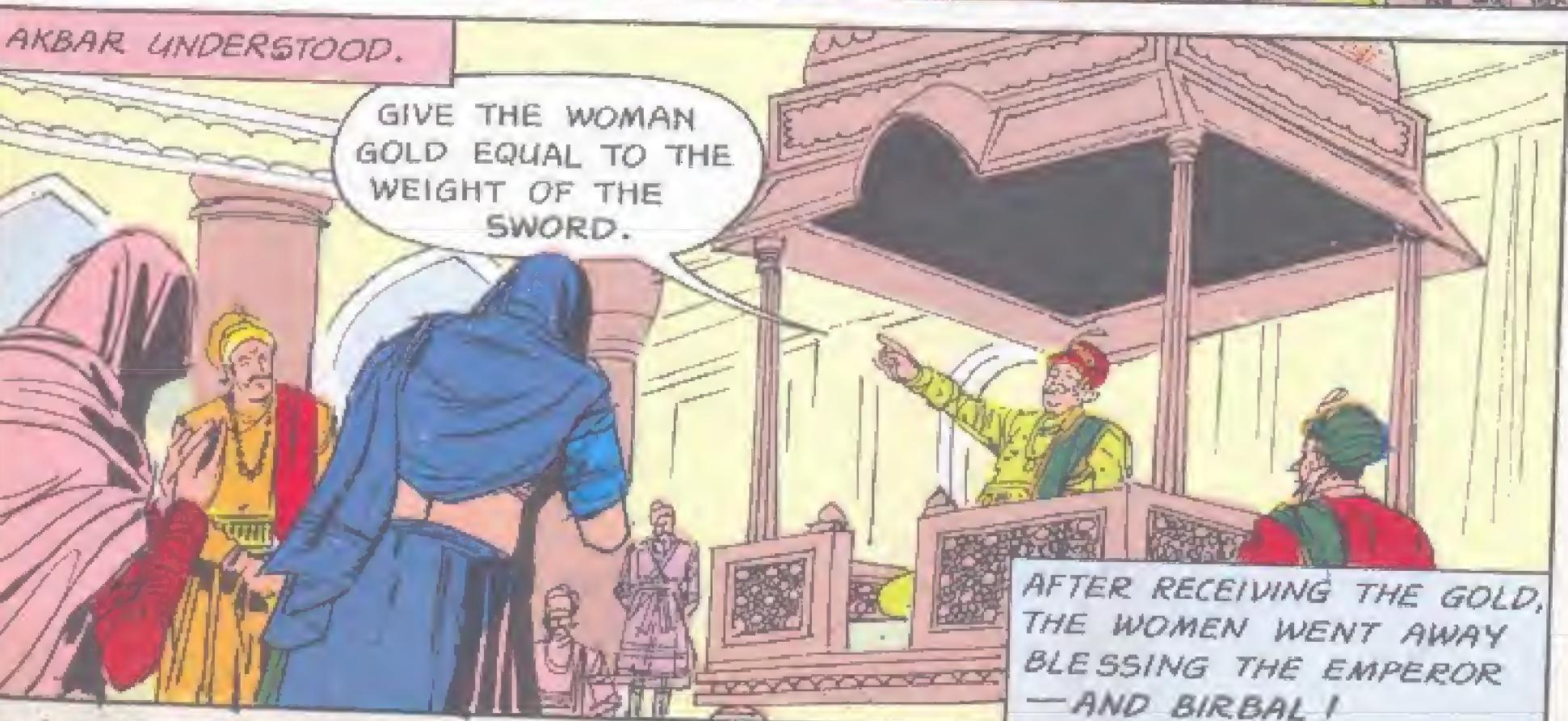
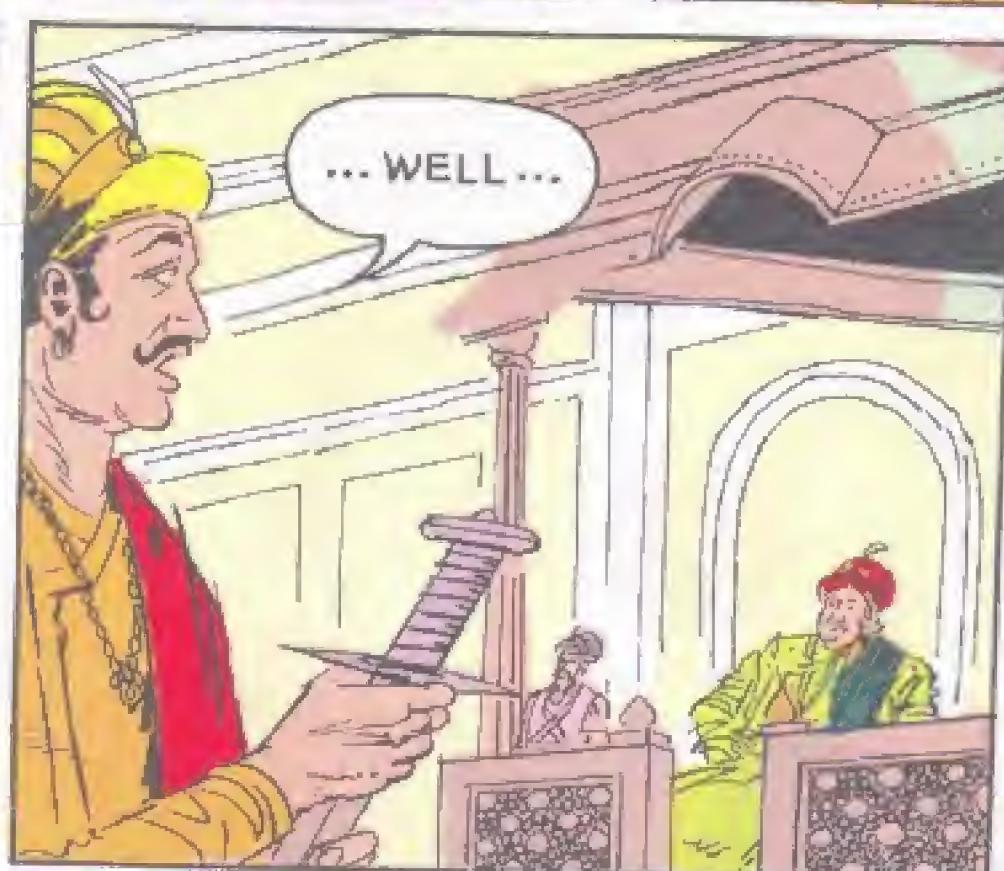
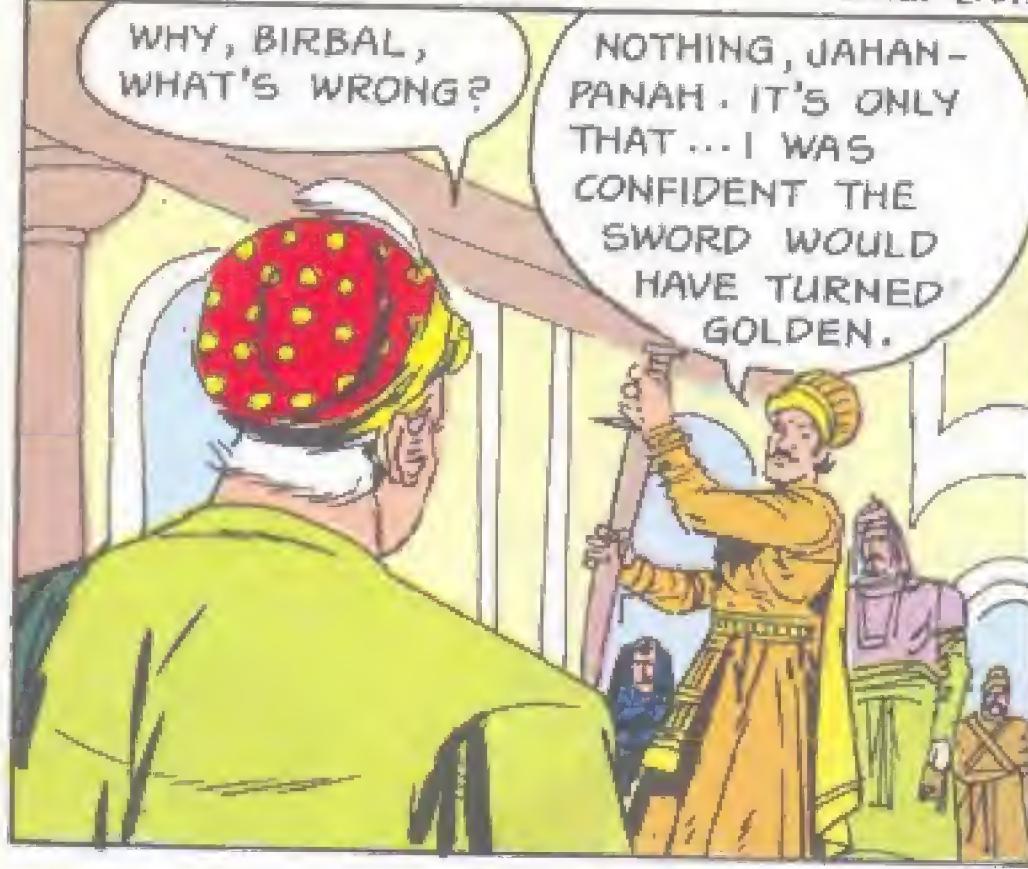
JUST
FIVE GOLD
COINS!

MAY
I INSPECT
THE SWORD,
JAHANPANAH?

BIRBAL TOOK THE
SWORD...

...AND LOOKED AT IT CLOSELY...

...AGAIN AND AGAIN.



A WIDOW'S SAVINGS

THE RICH AND THE POOR, THE YOUNG AND THE OLD, ALL SOUGHT BIRBAL'S HELP WHEN THEY WERE WRONGED. ONE DAY AN OLD WIDOW CAME TO SEE HIM.



I'M SORRY. I CAN'T
BE INVOLVED IN
WORLDLY MATTERS.
I DON'T TOUCH
MONEY BUT...

... YOU MAY DIG
A HOLE SOMEWHERE
IN MY HUT AND
BURY THE BAG
THERE YOURSELF.

"SO I WENT TO A CORNER OF
THE HUT AND DUG A SMALL HOLE."

MY COINS
WILL BE
SAFE HERE.

"ON MY RETURN, WHEN I WENT TO THE MENDICANT
TO COLLECT THE MONEY —"

WHAT MONEY
ARE YOU
TALKING
ABOUT?

THE BAG OF
COINS
I BURIED
IN YOUR
HUT.

25
222

25
222

12

YOU KNOW WHERE YOU'VE BURIED IT! FIND IT AND TAKE IT.

BUT, DON'T SPEAK ABOUT MONEY TO ME. I DON'T EVEN WANT TO HEAR THAT WORD.

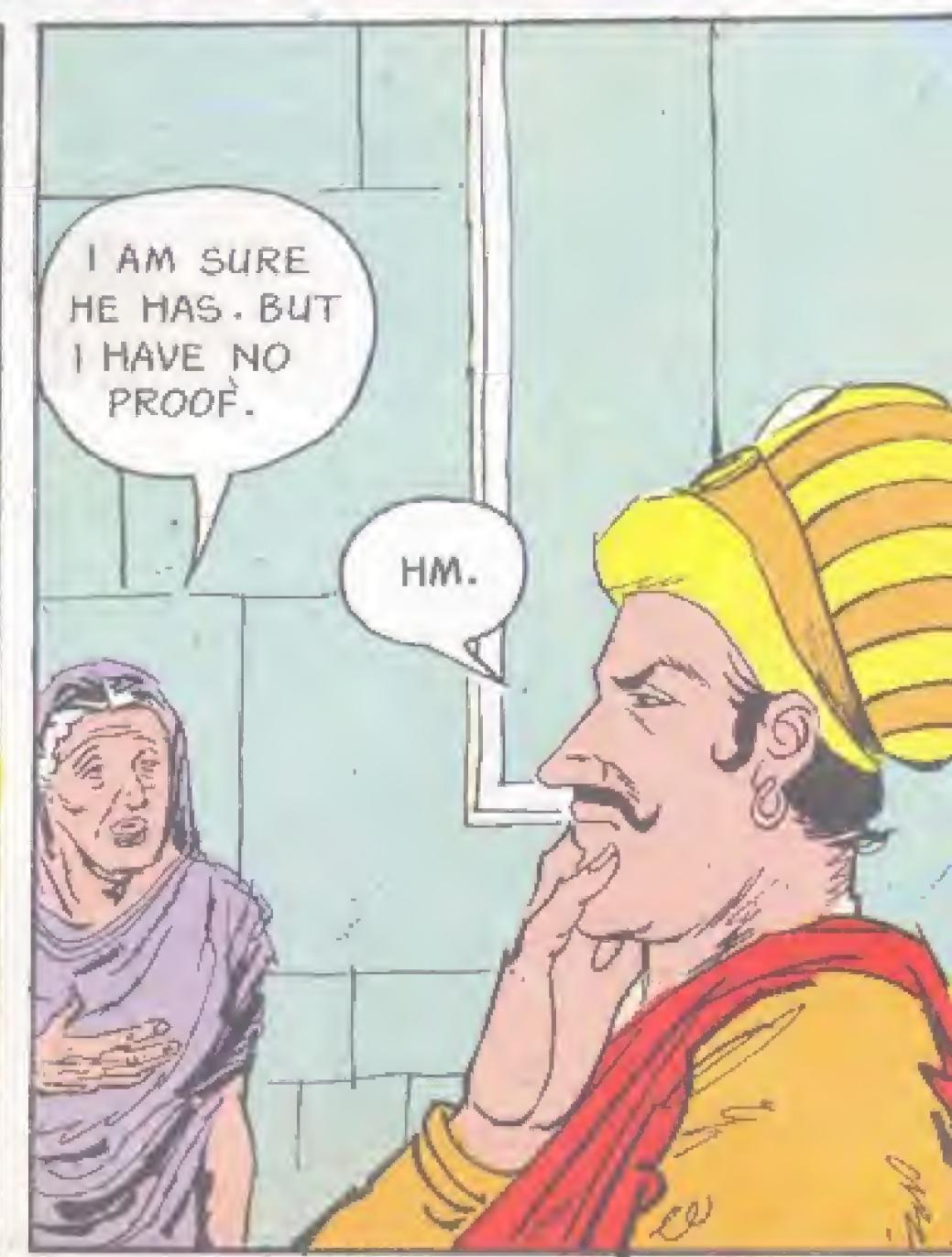
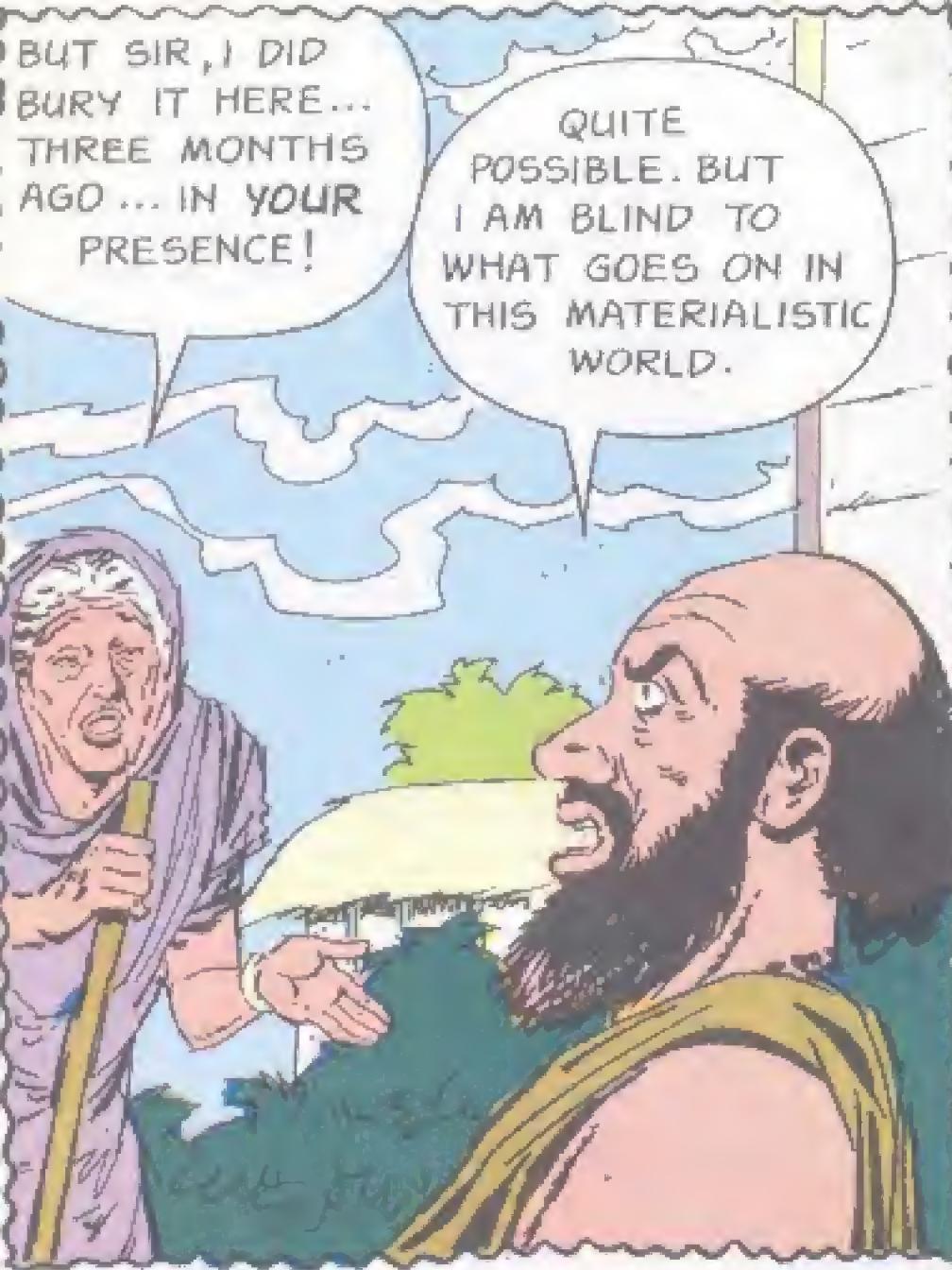
"SO I WENT TO THE CORNER."

IT'S GONE!

"I COULDN'T BELIEVE MY EYES."

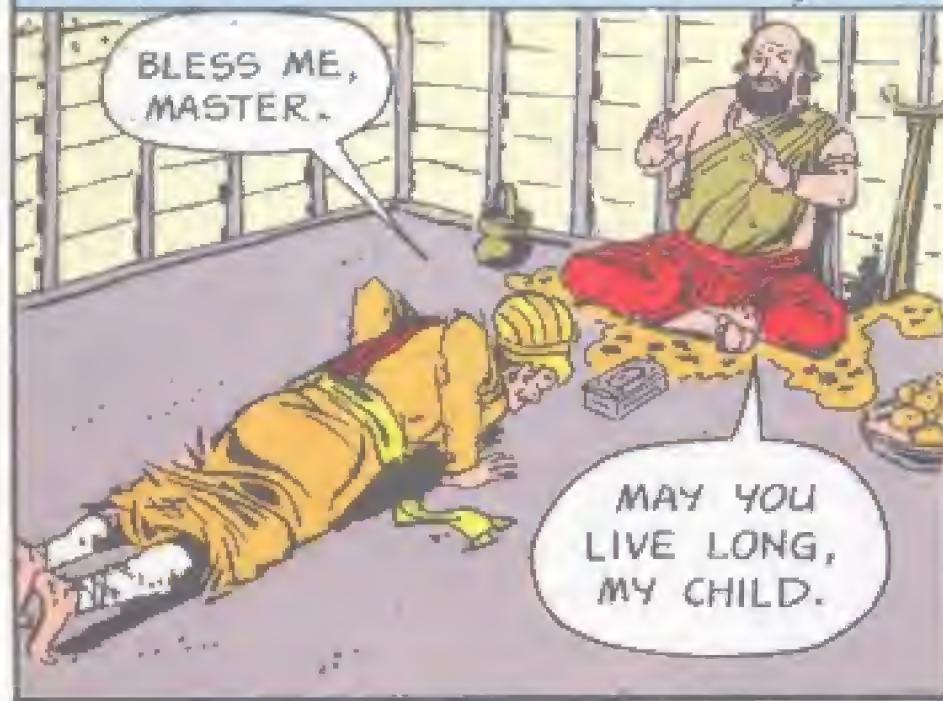
O HOLY ONE,
MY COINS! WHERE
ARE MY COINS?

BEGONE,
WOMAN. DON'T
BOther ME WITH
SUCH WORLDLY
MATTERS.





BIRBAL WENT INTO THE HUT AND FELL PROSTRATE IN FRONT OF THE MENDICANT.



I HAVE HEARD PEOPLE TALK ABOUT YOUR SPIRITUAL EMINENCE. TODAY I HAVE HAD THE GOOD FORTUNE OF RECEIVING YOUR BLESSINGS.

I WONDER WHAT HE HAS IN THE CASKET. GOLD? JEWELS?

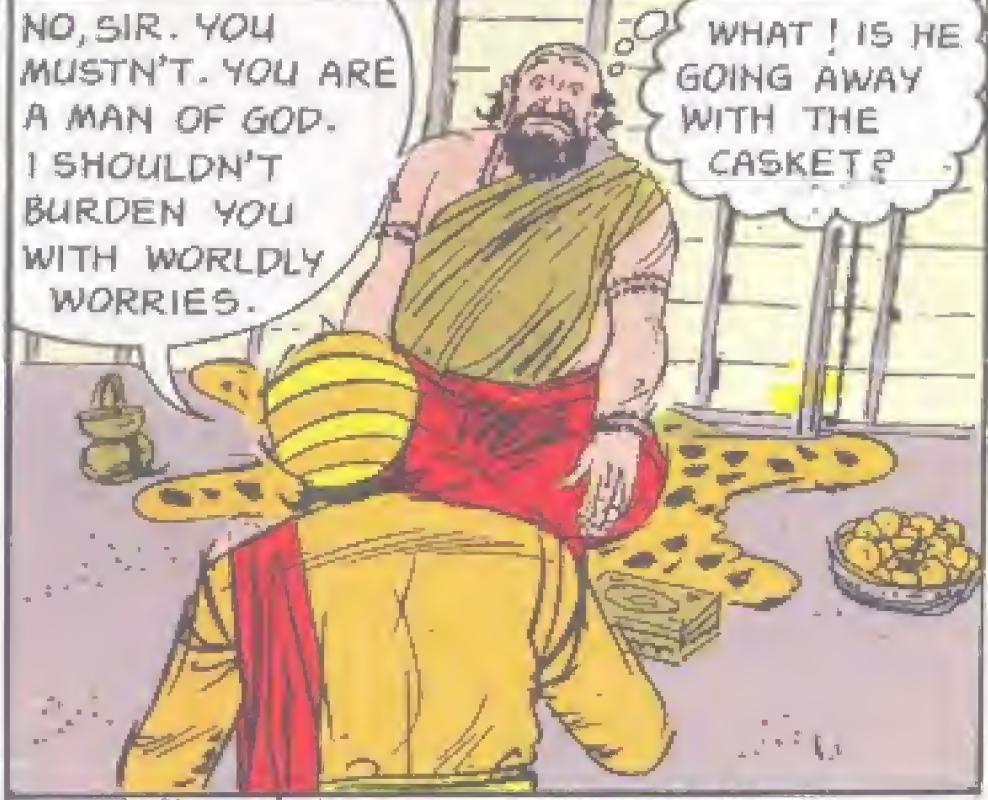
HOLY ONE, I HATE TO TROUBLE YOU WITH THE PROBLEMS WE FOOLISH MORTALS HAVE. BUT...

SPEAK UP, CHILD. LET ME HELP YOU IF I CAN.



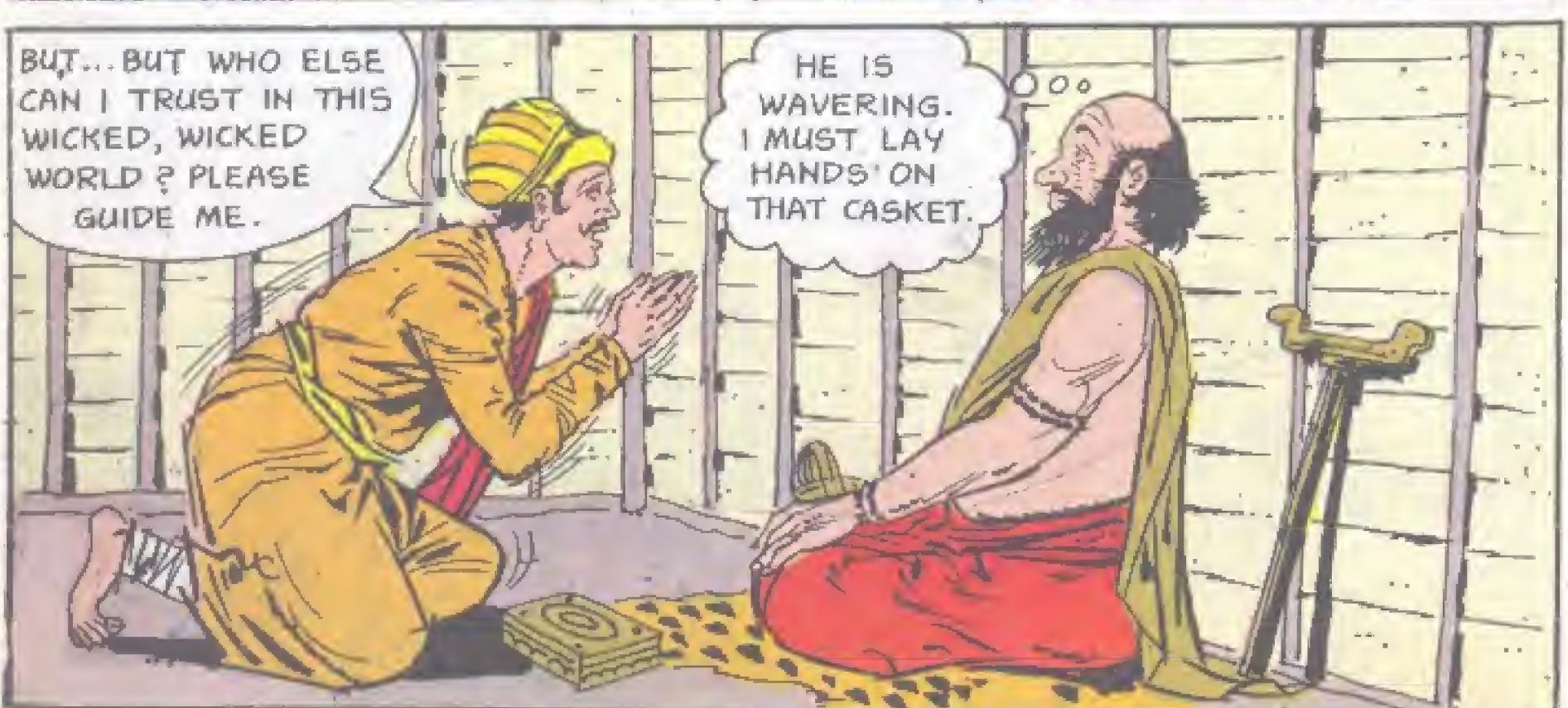
NO, SIR. YOU MUSTN'T. YOU ARE A MAN OF GOD. I SHOULDN'T BURDEN YOU WITH WORLDLY WORRIES.

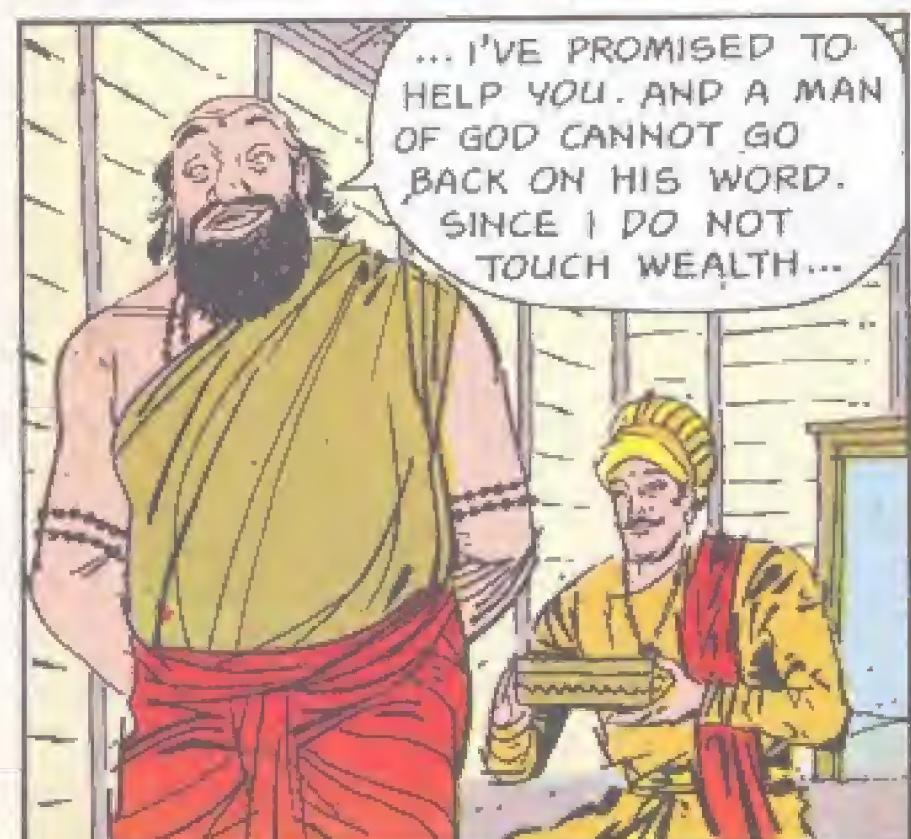
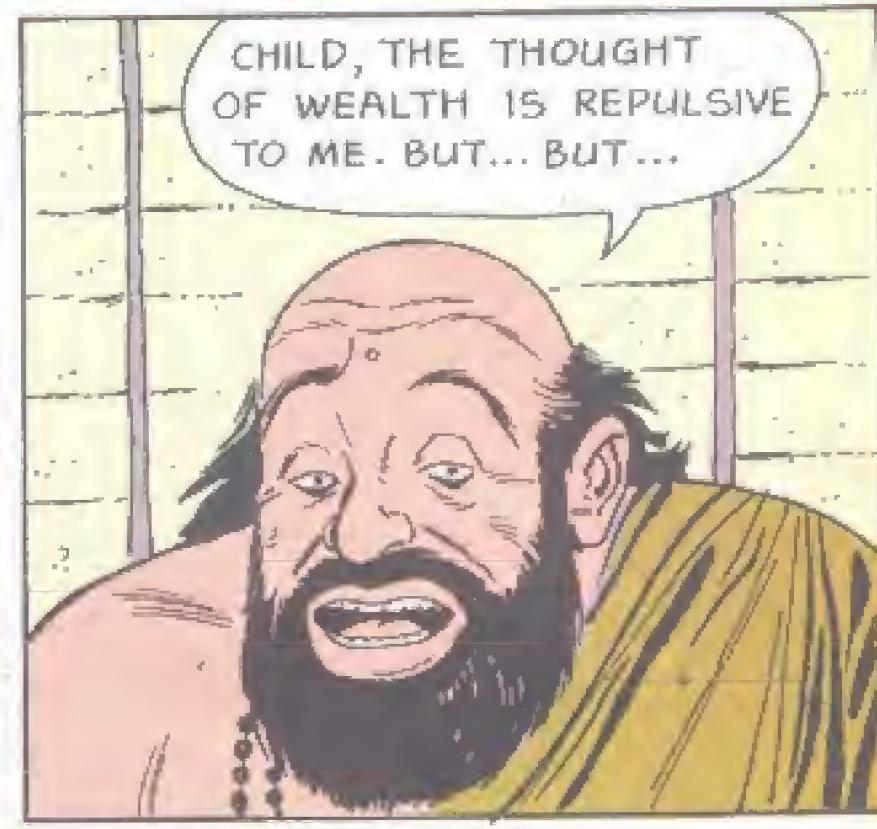
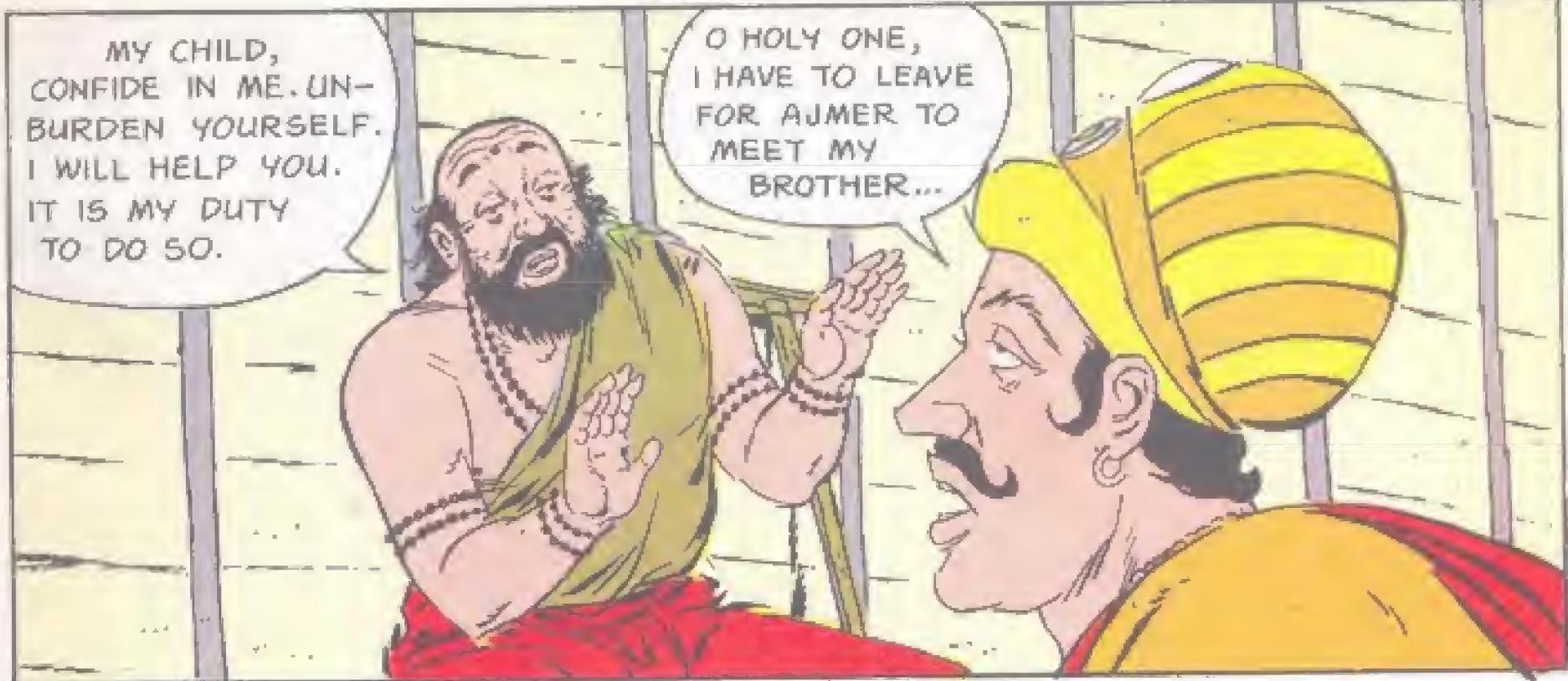
WHAT! IS HE GOING AWAY WITH THE CASKET?



BUT... BUT WHO ELSE CAN I TRUST IN THIS WICKED, WICKED WORLD? PLEASE GUIDE ME.

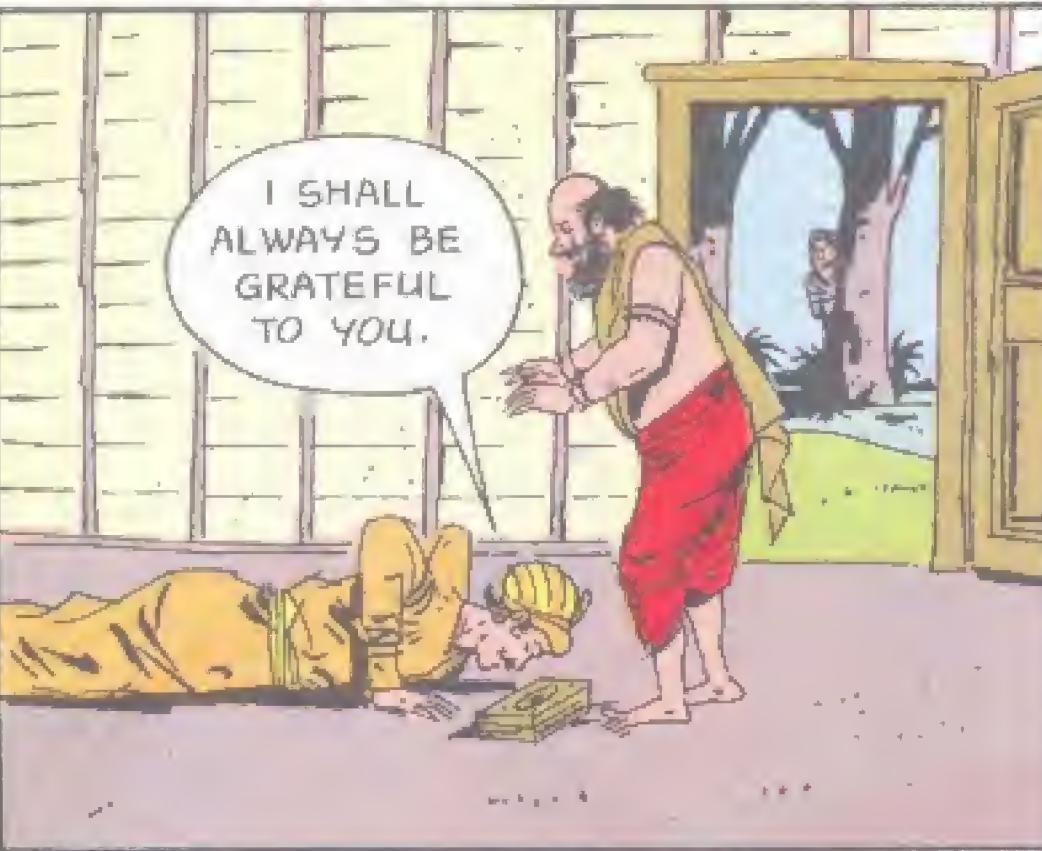
HE IS WAVERING. I MUST LAY HANDS ON THAT CASKET.





I SHALL
ALWAYS BE
GRATEFUL
TO YOU.

AH!
THAT'S
MY CUE.



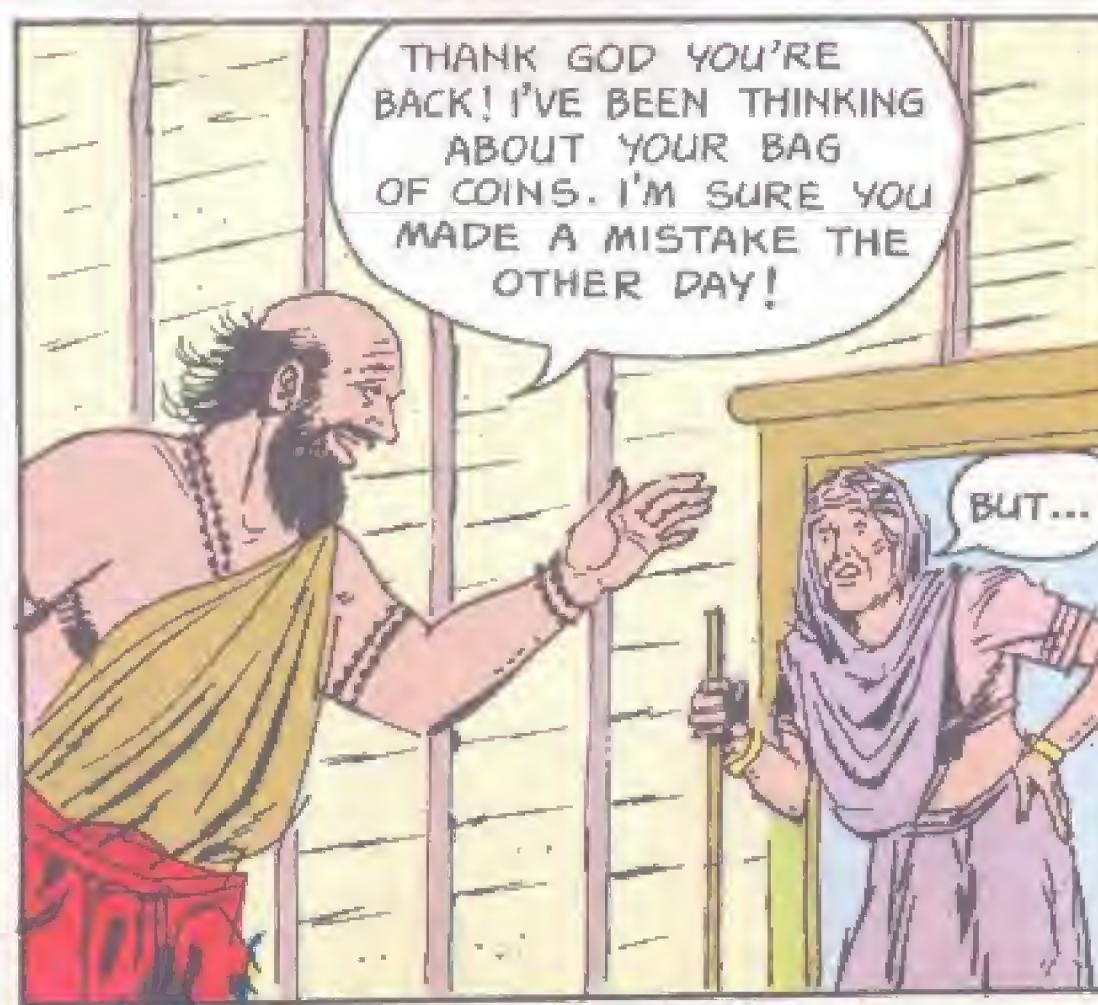
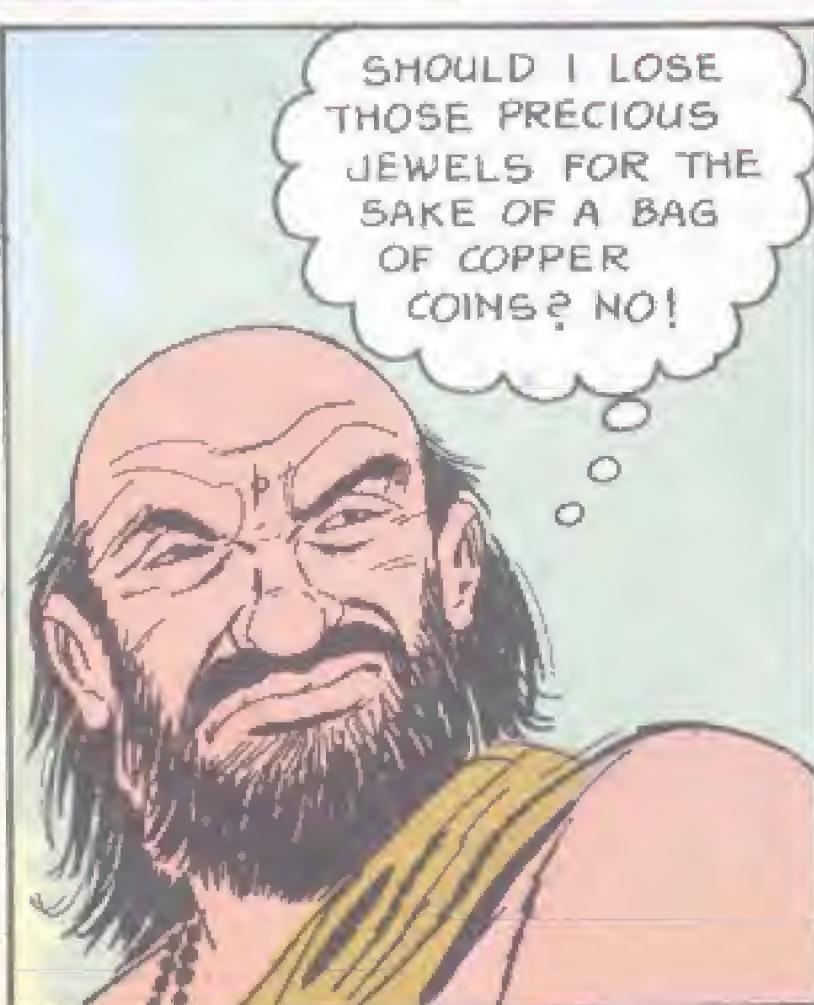
AS THE OLD WOMAN ENTERED THE HUT —

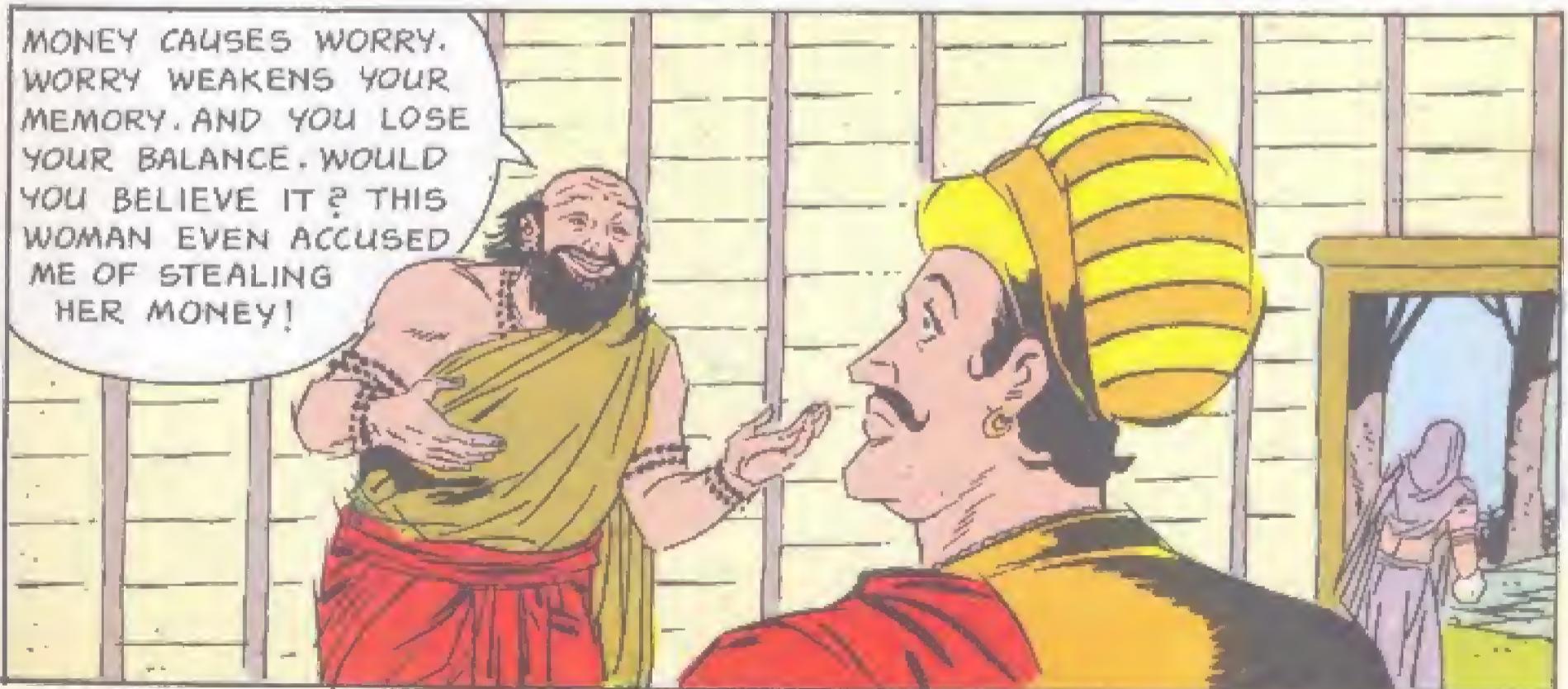
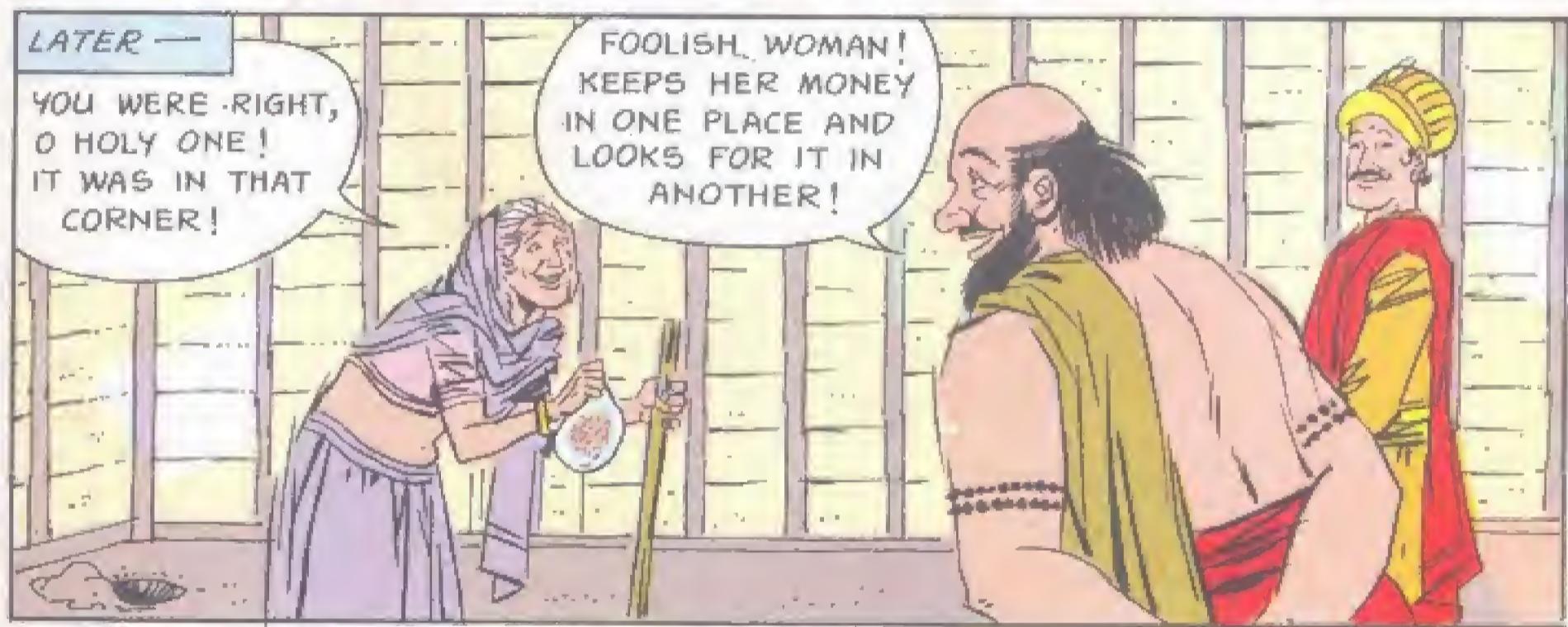
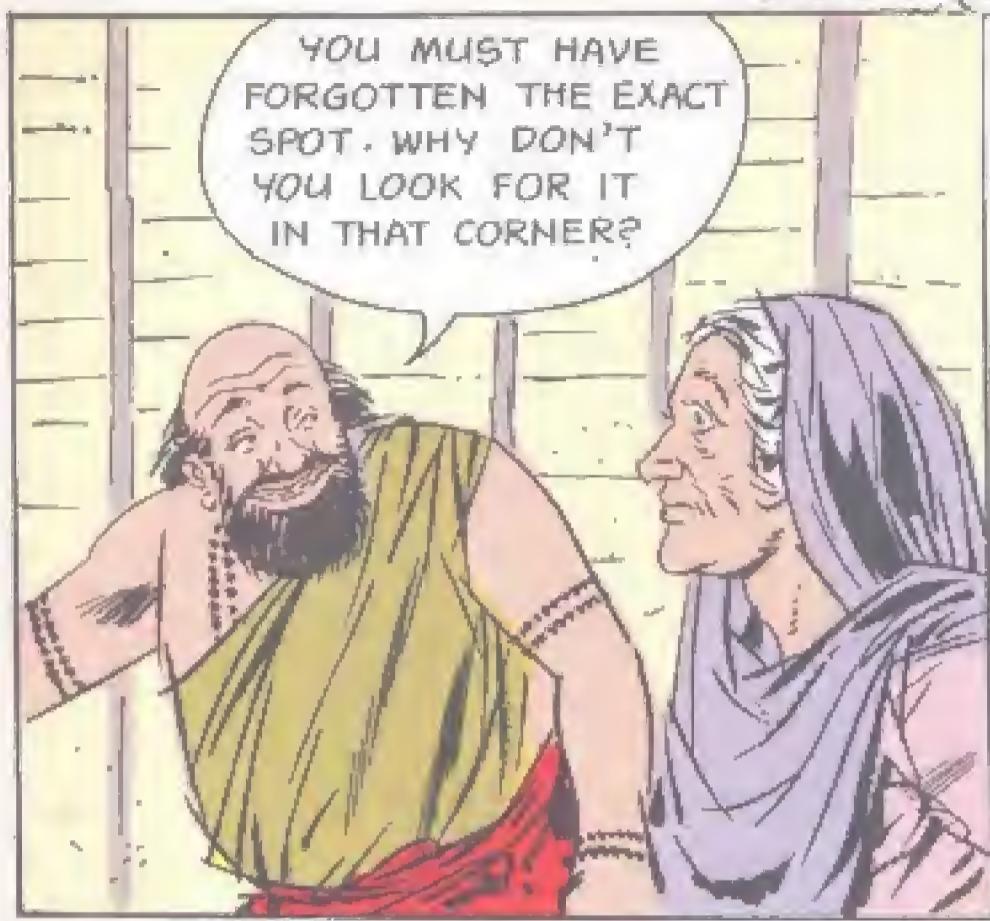
WHY DID THIS WRETCH
HAVE TO COME HERE
NOW? WHAT IF SHE
STARTS SHOUTING
FOR HER MONEY?



SHOULD I LOSE
THOSE PRECIOUS
JEWELS FOR THE
SAKE OF A BAG
OF COPPER
COINS? NO!

THANK GOD YOU'RE
BACK! I'VE BEEN THINKING
ABOUT YOUR BAG
OF COINS. I'M SURE YOU
MADE A MISTAKE THE
OTHER DAY!





SO CHILD, BURY YOUR CASKET ANYWHERE BUT DO REMEMBER THE PLACE. I DON'T UNDERSTAND ANYTHING ABOUT THESE WORLDLY MATTERS.

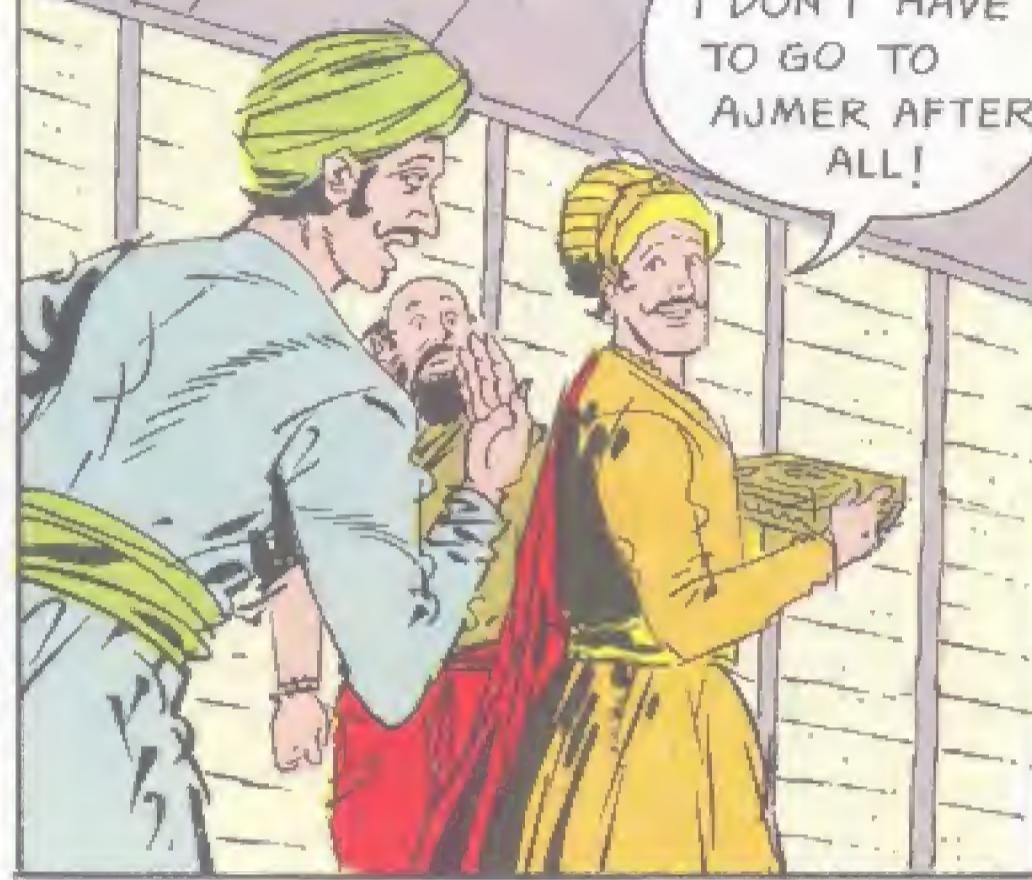
I CAN SEE THAT!



AN ATTENDANT CAME TO

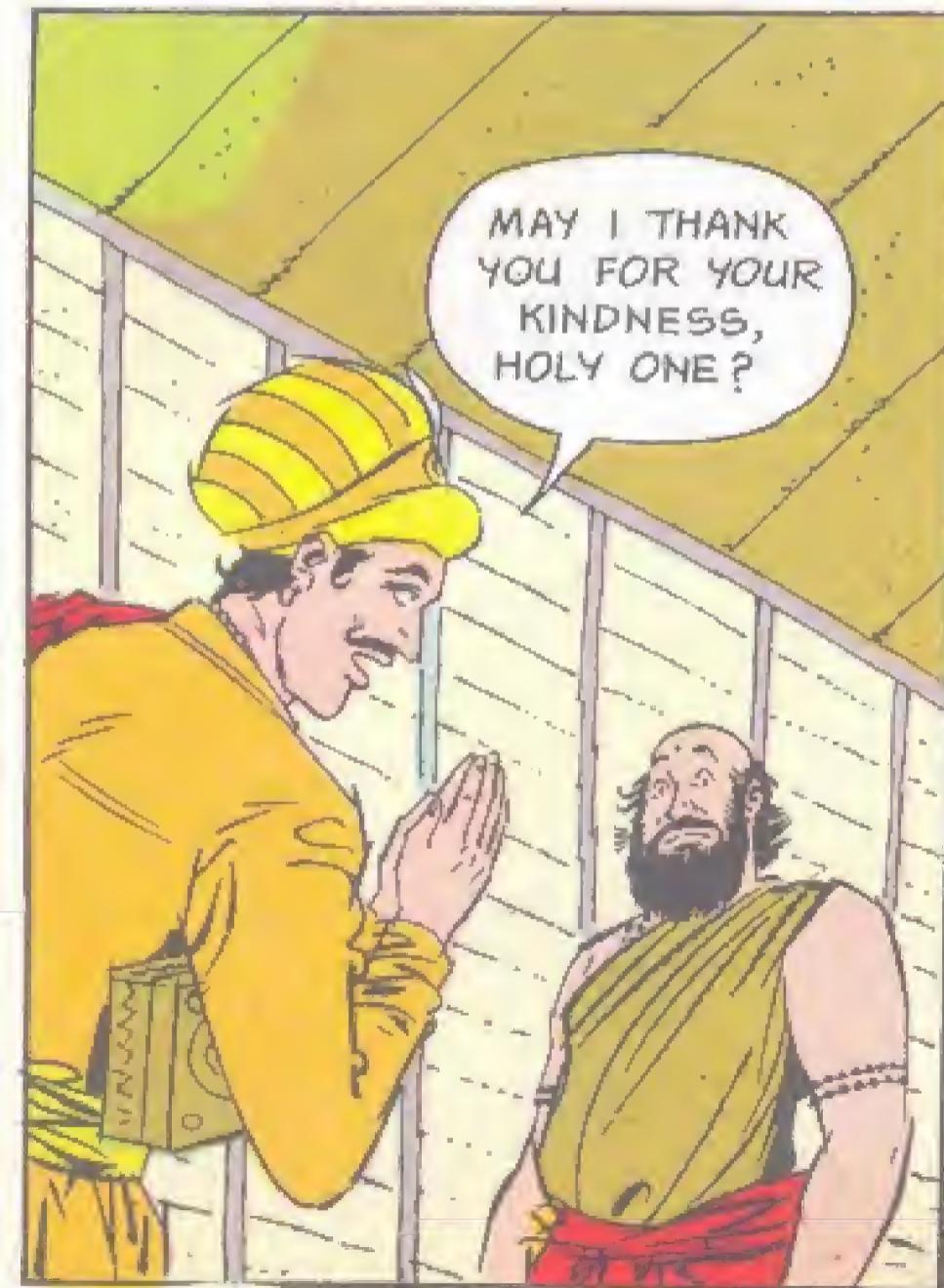
HUZUR, YOUR BROTHER HAS COME TO VISIT YOU! HE WANTS TO MEET YOU IMMEDIATELY.

OH, OH! SO I DON'T HAVE TO GO TO AJMER AFTER ALL!



MAY I THANK YOU FOR YOUR KINDNESS, HOLY ONE?

AND BIRBAL WALKED OUT WITH THE CASKET.



THE PERFECT PORTRAIT

ONE DAY, BIRBAL WAS SURPRISED TO FIND THE NORMALLY CHEERFUL COURT ARTIST LOOKING GLUM.

WHAT'S THE MATTER, MY FRIEND?

MY REPUTATION IS AT STAKE.

BUT YOU ARE THE BEST ARTIST THE COURT HAS EVER KNOWN. I DON'T UNDERSTAND...

YOU WILL, WHEN I'VE TOLD YOU THE WHOLE STORY.

THE ARTIST TOOK BIRBAL TO HIS HOUSE AND SHOWED HIM FIVE PORTRAITS.

THEY ARE OF A RICH NOBLE.

AREN'T THESE OF THE SAME MAN?

"A MONTH AGO HE THREW ME A CHALLENGE."

I BET, YOU CAN'T CREATE AN EXACT LIKENESS OF ME.

I BET, I CAN.

"HE POSED AND I GOT DOWN TO WORK. AT LAST —

THAT'S ALL. I'LL GIVE THE PORTRAIT A FEW FINISHING TOUCHES AND BRING IT TO YOU TOMORROW.

"ON THE FOLLOWING DAY, WHEN I HANDED THE PORTRAIT TO HIM, CONFIDENT OF WINNING THE BET —"

THIS WON'T DO! IT ISN'T AN EXACT LIKENESS. I DON'T HAVE A BEARD!

BUT YOU DID HAVE ONE WHEN YOU POSED FOR THE PORTRAIT!

A BET IS A BET! AND AN EXACT LIKENESS AN EXACT LIKENESS! HERE! YOU MAY KEEP THIS AS A MEMENTO.

PLEASE GIVE ME ANOTHER CHANCE.

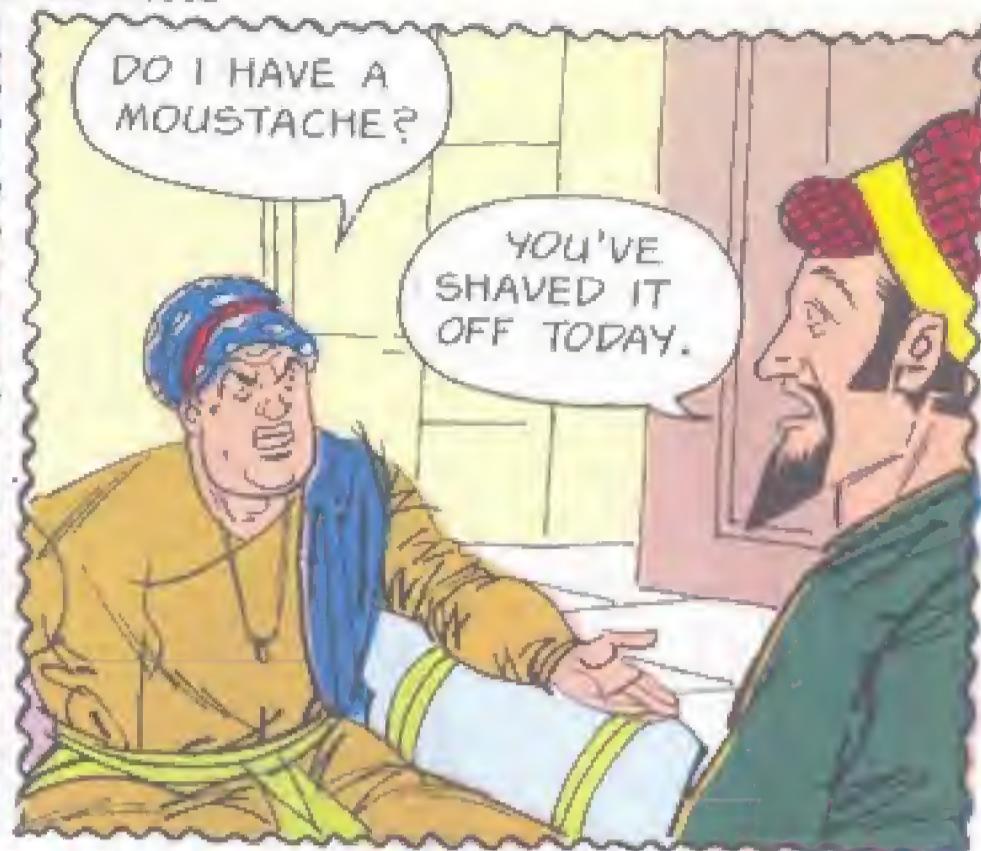
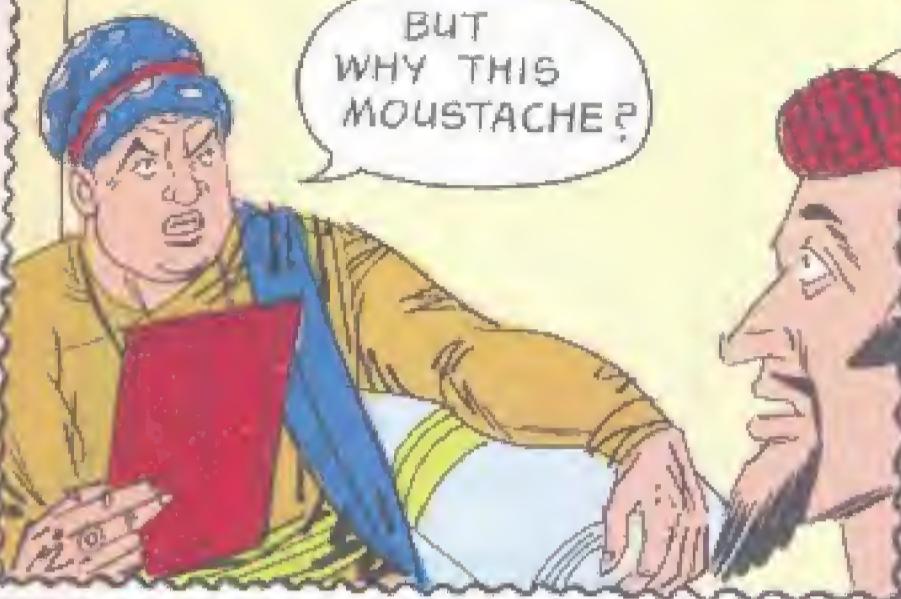
ALL RIGHT. YOU MAY TRY AGAIN.

"HE POSED FOR ME ONCE MORE.
WHEN I TOOK THE FINISHED
PORTRAIT TO HIM —"

BUT
WHY THIS
MOUSTACHE?

DO I HAVE A
MOUSTACHE?

YOU'VE
SHAVED IT
OFF TODAY.



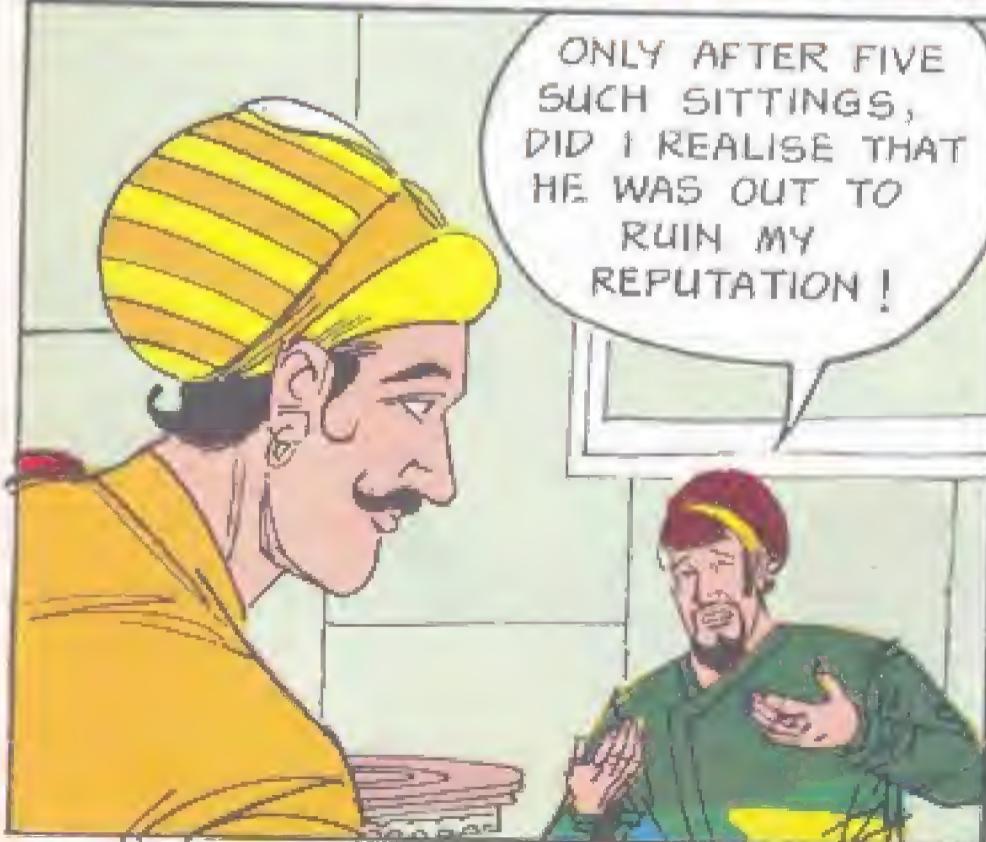
NO MORE OF YOUR
CHEEK, YOUNG MAN!
THE COURT WILL
SOON KNOW WHAT
KIND OF ARTIST
YOU ARE!

NO! PLEASE
GIVE ME ANOTHER
CHANCE!



ONLY AFTER FIVE
SUCH SITTINGS,
DID I REALISE THAT
HE WAS OUT TO
RUIN MY
REPUTATION!

OH! WHAT A
FOOL I'VE
BEEN! HOW
COULD I...



CALM YOURSELF, MY FRIEND. ALL IS NOT LOST! DO AS I TELL YOU AND YOU'LL HAVE THE LAST LAUGH!

A FEW DAYS LATER —

OH, IT'S YOU AGAIN! WHAT HAVE YOU COME WITH NOW? ANOTHER USE-LESS PORTRAIT?

WHEN THE NOBLE UNWRAPPED THE PARCEL —

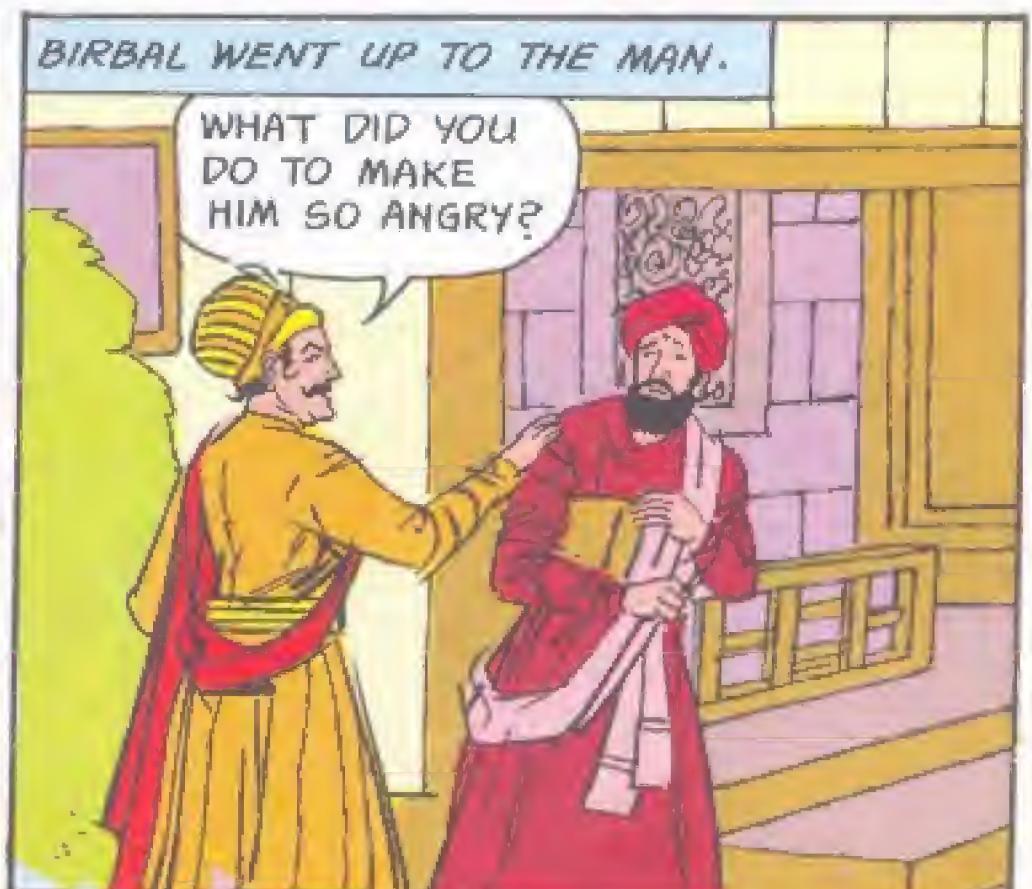
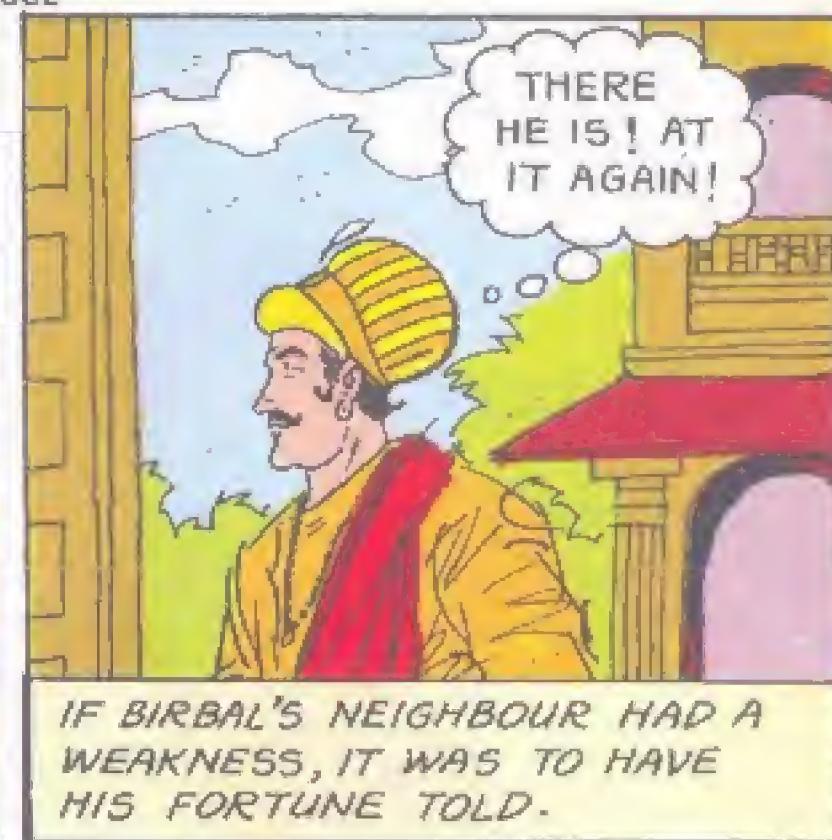
A MIRROR!

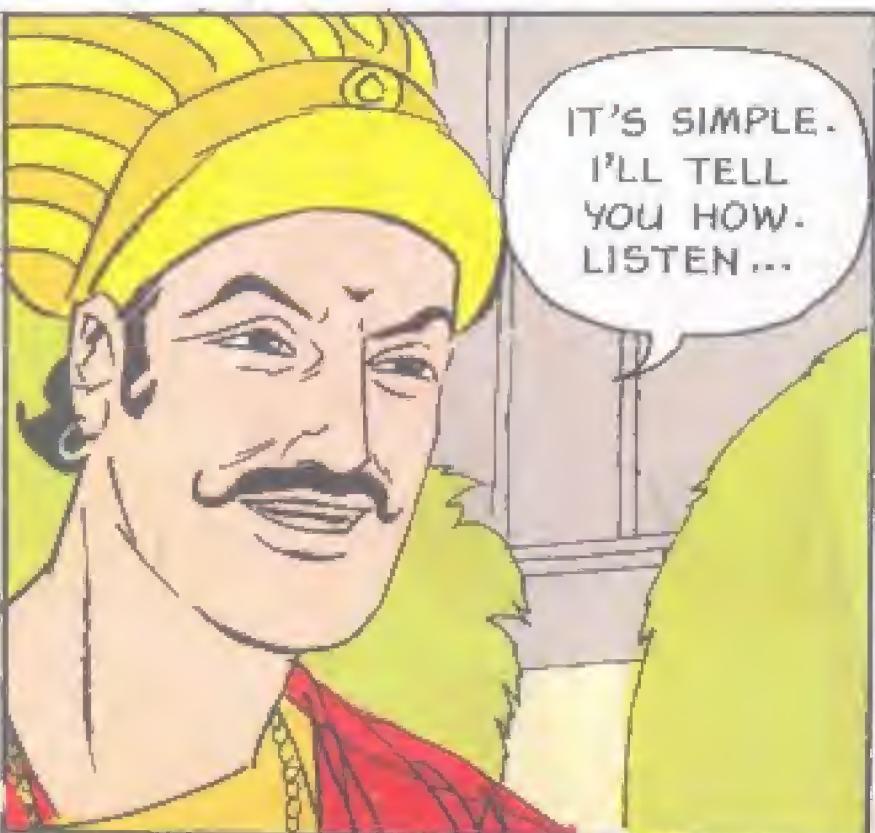
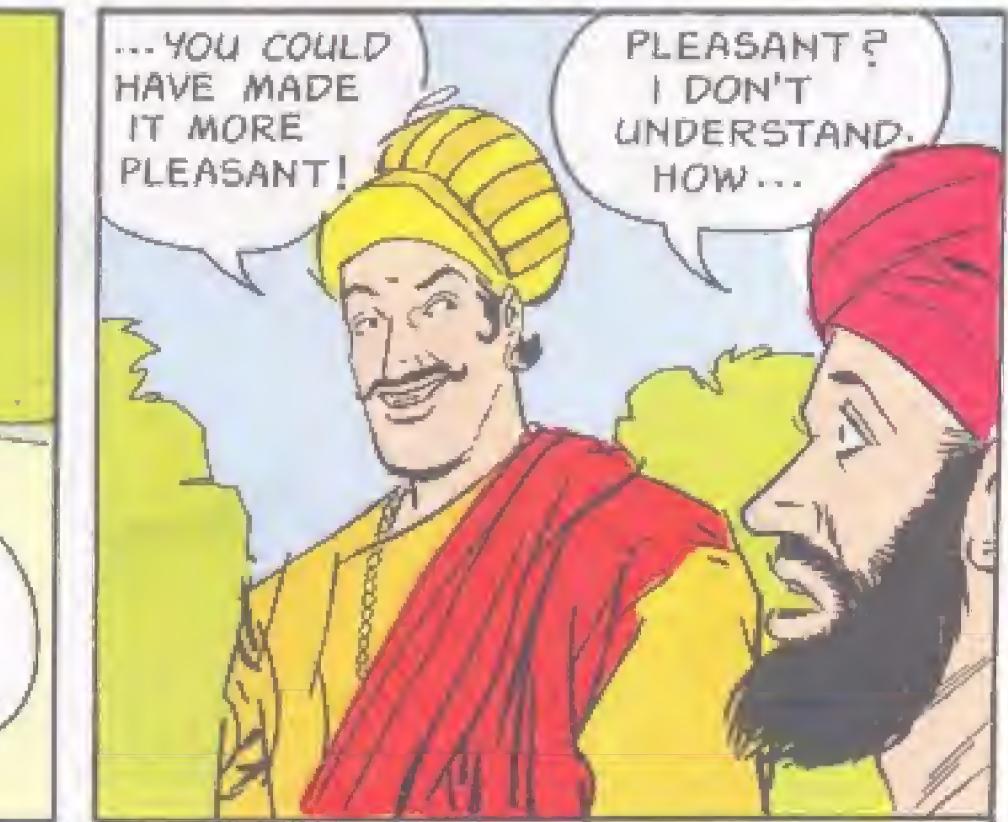
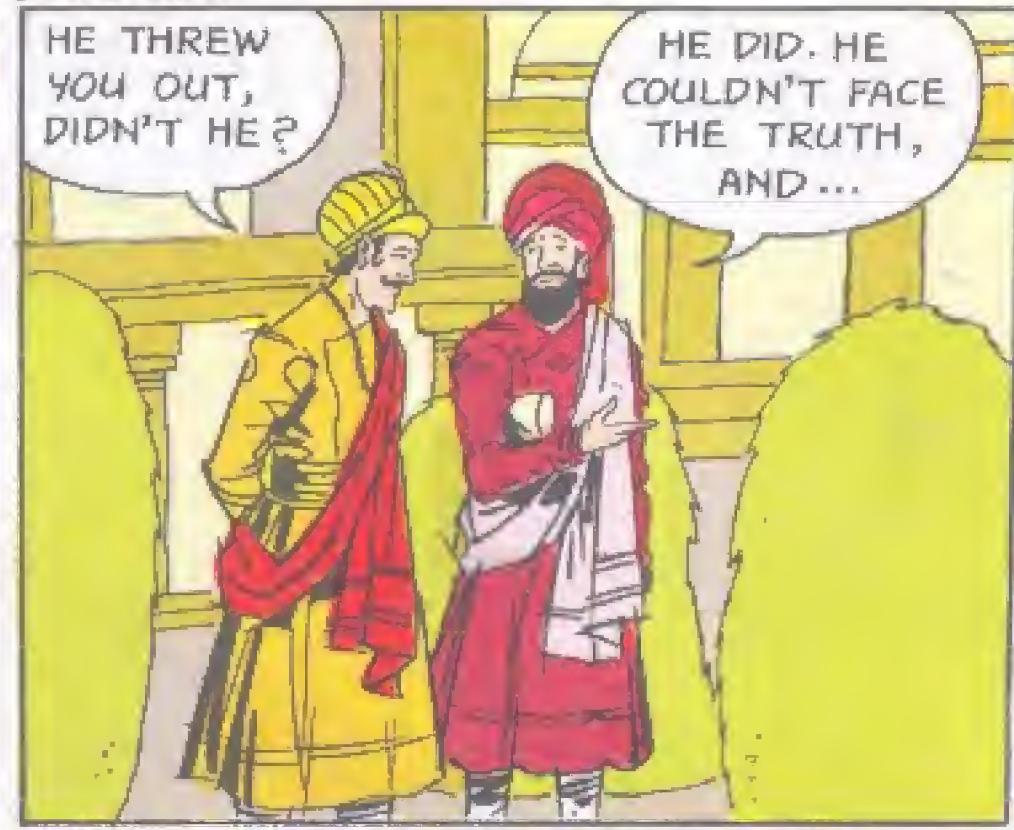
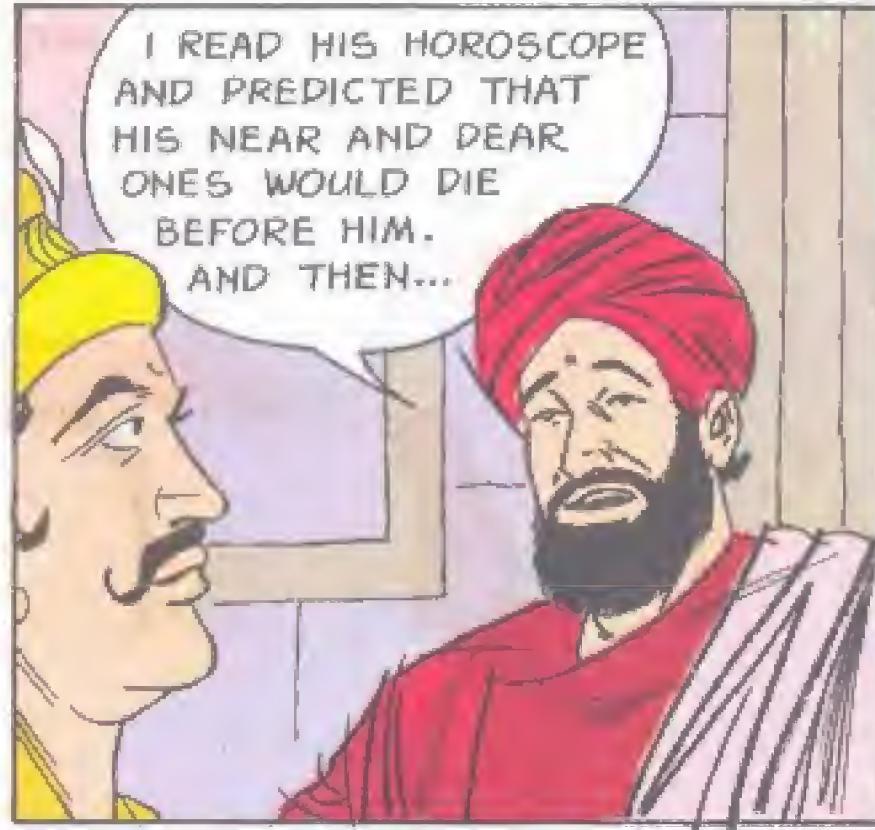
HOW DARE YOU PLAY GAMES WITH ME! THIS IS NO PORTRAIT! IT'S...

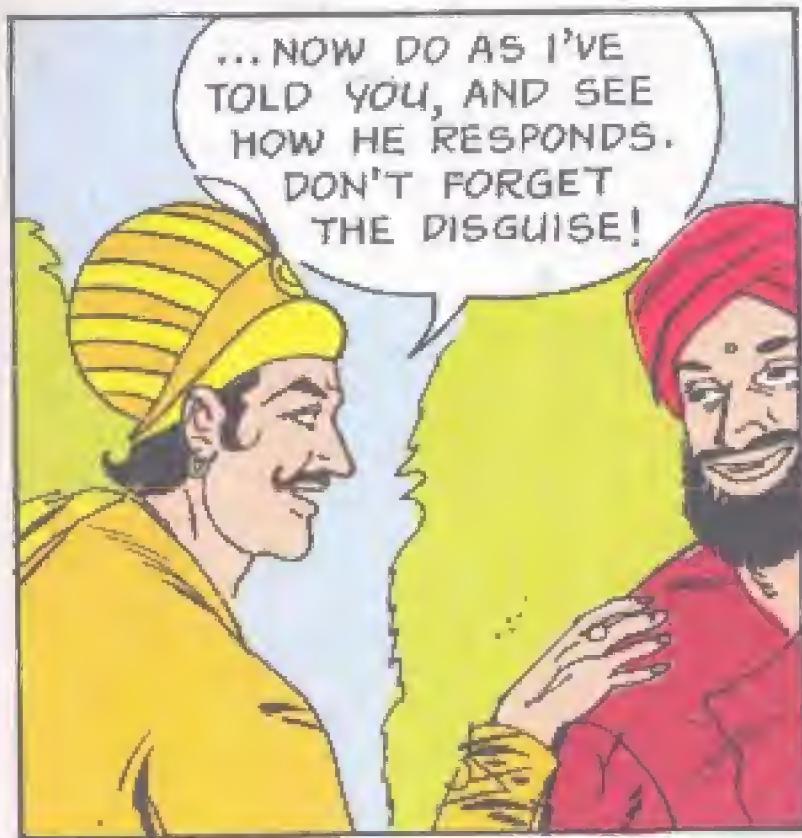
AN EXACT LIKENESS OF YOURSELF! ISN'T THAT WHAT YOU WANTED, MY FRIEND?

THE NOBLE SHEEPISHLY ACCEPTED DEFEAT AND THE ARTIST BECAME HIS CHEERFUL SELF AGAIN.

SPEAK THE TRUTH BUT MAKE IT PLEASANT







... YOU'LL LIVE
LONGER THAN ALL
YOUR NEAR AND
DEAR ONES!

REALLY? AND
THAT RASCAL
SAID YESTERDAY
THAT...

NEVER MIND! WHY
TALK OF INAUSPICIOUS
MATTERS AT THIS
AUSPICIOUS MOMENT?
WAIT. I HAVE SOME-
THING FOR YOU.



HE WENT IN AND CAME OUT WITH A
BAG OF COINS.

DO COME AGAIN
WHENEVER YOU
HAVE THE TIME.

I WILL.
MOST
CERTAINLY!



LATER —

I NEVER DREAMT, HUZUR,
THAT THE MANNER IN
WHICH I WORD MY READ-
ING IS EVEN MORE
IMPORTANT THAN THE
READING ITSELF!



THE HOLY PARROT



LATER, AT AKBAR'S COURT —

JAHANPANAH,
DO YOU
REMEMBER
THE PARROT
THAT FAKIR
GAVE YOU?
IT'S A HOLY
BIRD INDEED!

A HOLY BIRD,
INDEED. HA!
HA! HA!

IT IS, JAHANPANAH.
I HAD GONE TO SEE IT.
AND WHAT DO YOU
THINK IT WAS
DOING?

MEDITATING! WITH ITS
EYES CLOSED AND ITS
HEAD TURNED SKY-
WARDS!

YOU
MUST BE
JOKING.

SO THE TWO WENT TO THE ATTENDANT'S
HOUSE. WHEN AKBAR SAW THE BIRD —

BIRBAL
YOU MAY BE
WISE, AND
CLEVER!
BUT THERE
IS A
LIMIT.

THIS BIRD IS DEAD!
AND DON'T TELL ME
YOU DIDN'T KNOW IT.

I DID. BUT
I DIDN'T
WANT TO BE
BEHEADED!

ONLY THEN DID AKBAR REMEMBER
WHAT HE HAD TOLD HIS ATTENDANT.

WELL! WELL! WELL! YOU'VE
SAVED YET ANOTHER HEAD,
BIRBAL. AND I'M GRATEFUL
TO YOU FOR IT.

AKBAR THE HUNTER

AKBAR WAS EXTREMELY FOND OF HUNTING. ONE DAY—



HIS MEN HAVE ORDERS TO CREATE MORE AND MORE NEW FORESTS.

THE KING WANTS NEW JUNGLES TO HUNT IN.

I'LL TRY AND DO WHAT I CAN.



ON THE NEXT HUNTING TRIP—

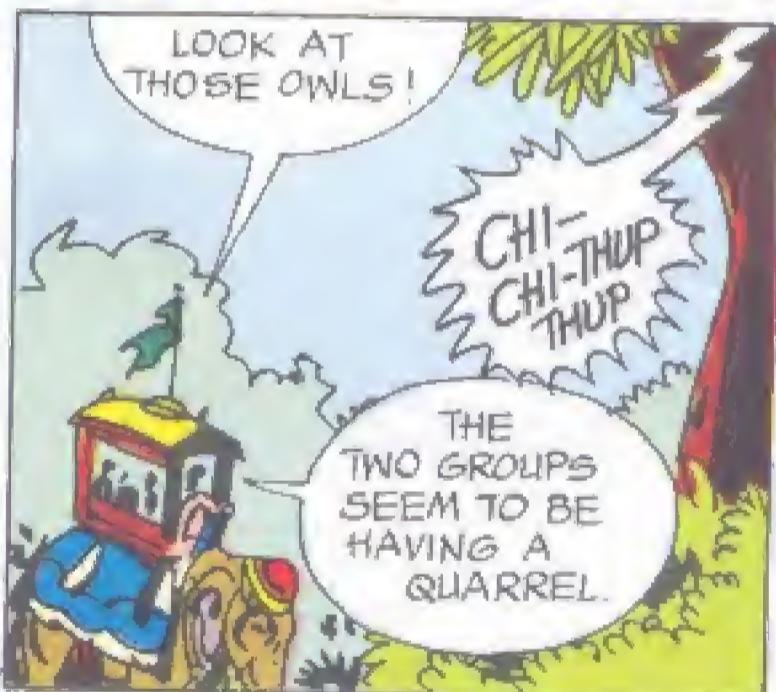
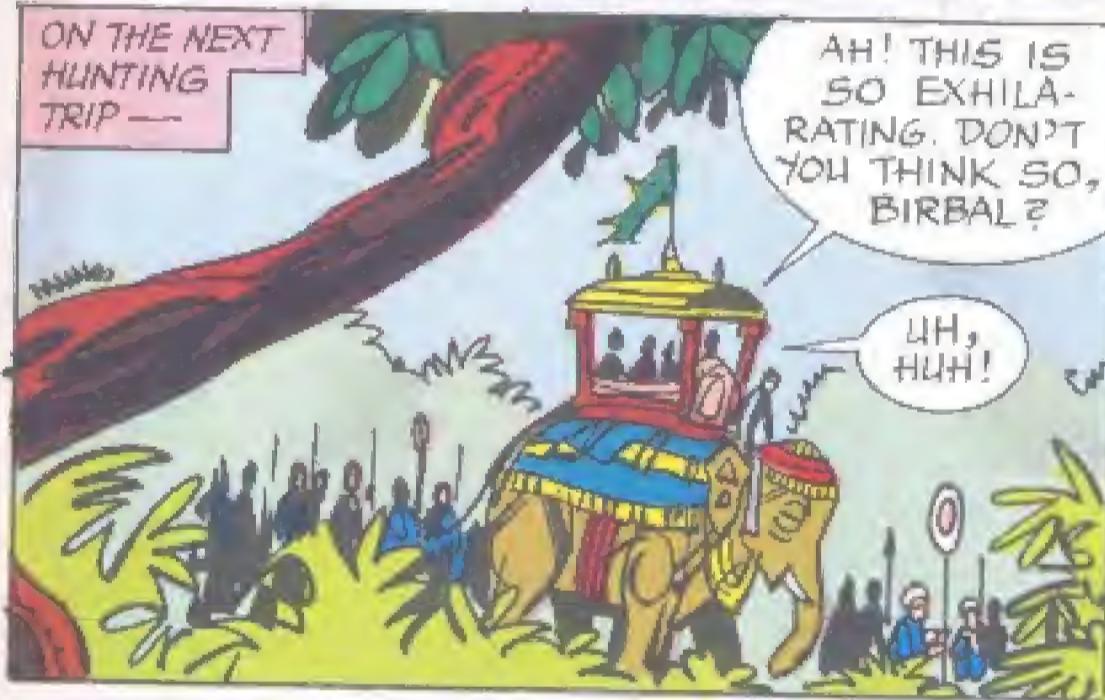
AH! THIS IS SO EXHILARATING. DON'T YOU THINK SO, BIRBAL?

UH, HUH!

LOOK AT THOSE OWLS!

CHI-CHI-THUP THUP

THE TWO GROUPS SEEM TO BE HAVING A QUARREL.

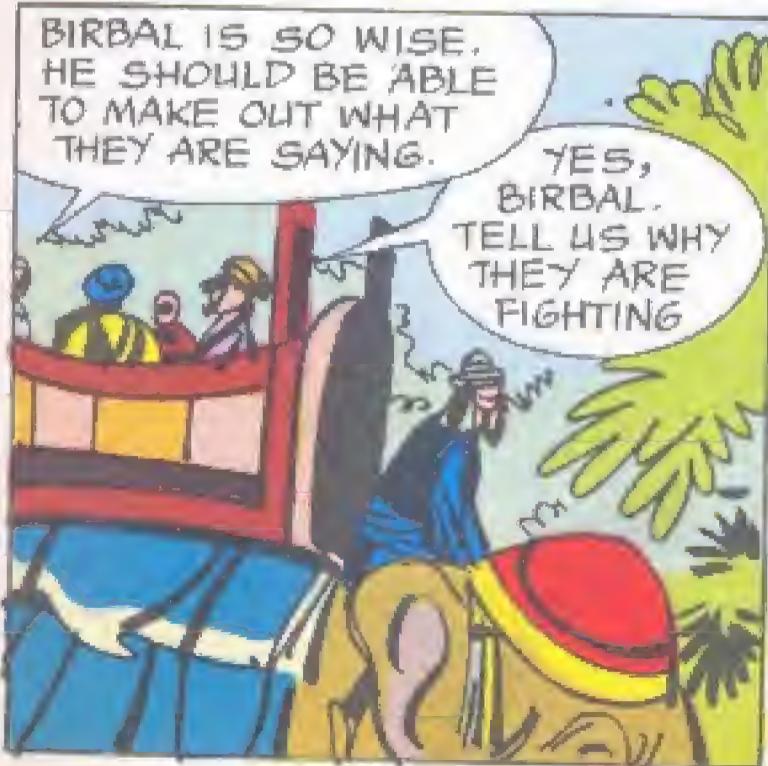


BIRBAL IS SO WISE. HE SHOULD BE ABLE TO MAKE OUT WHAT THEY ARE SAYING.

YES, BIRBAL. TELL US WHY THEY ARE FIGHTING

I COULD TELL YOU BUT...

WHY DO YOU HESITATE?



YOUR MAJESTY MAY NOT LIKE TO HEAR IT.

GO ON. WHY SHOULD I MIND WHAT THE BIRDS SAY?



A GROUP OF OWLS HAVE COME FROM THE NEIGHBOURING KINGDOM TO MARRY ONE OF THEIR BOYS TO A GIRL OWL HERE.

THEY ARE ARRANGING FOR THE MARRIAGE. BUT THERE IS A DISPUTE BETWEEN THE GROOM'S FATHER AND THE BRIDE'S FATHER.

WHY?

THE BOY'S FATHER IS DEMANDING A GIFT OF FORTY FORESTS. BUT THE GIRL'S FATHER IS SAYING HE CANNOT COMPLY NOW...

... HOWEVER, AFTER A FEW YEARS, HE PROMISES TO GIFT EIGHTY FORESTS TO THE COUPLE.

HOW? IF HE DOESN'T HAVE FORTY FORESTS NOW, HOW WILL HE GIVE DOUBLE THE NUMBER LATER?

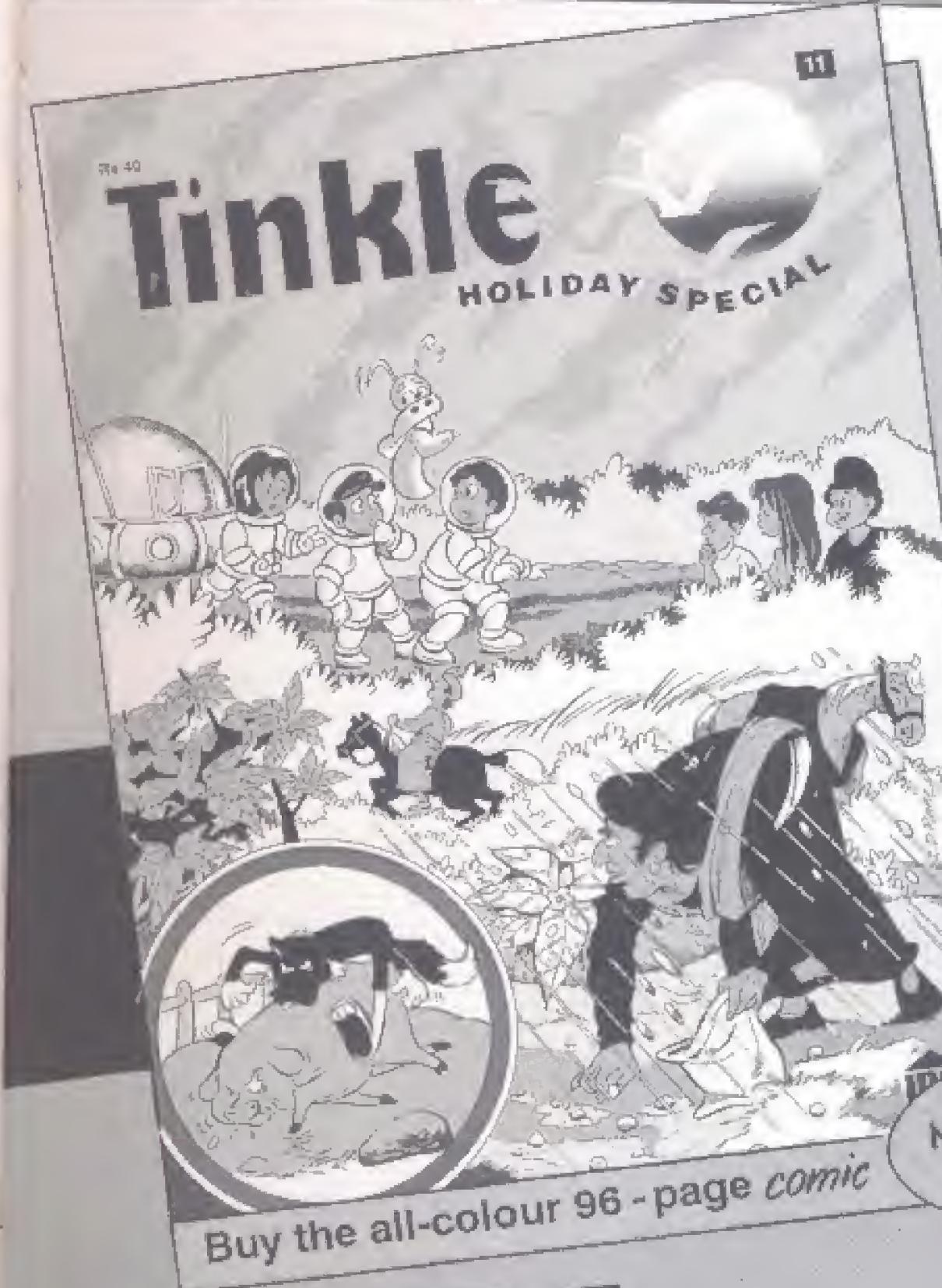
WELL, HE SAYS THE EMPEROR HERE IS VERY FOND OF HUNTING.

HE KEEPS CONVERTING VILLAGES INTO JUNGLES FOR HIS HUNTING PLEASURE SO THE NUMBER OF FORESTS IS SURE TO DOUBLE IN THE FUTURE.

AKBAR UNDERSTOOD THE MESSAGE BIRBAL WAS TRYING TO CONVEY.

YOU ARE RIGHT, BIRBAL. IT IS SELFISH OF ME TO DESTROY VILLAGE AFTER VILLAGE FOR MY HUNTING PLEASURE.

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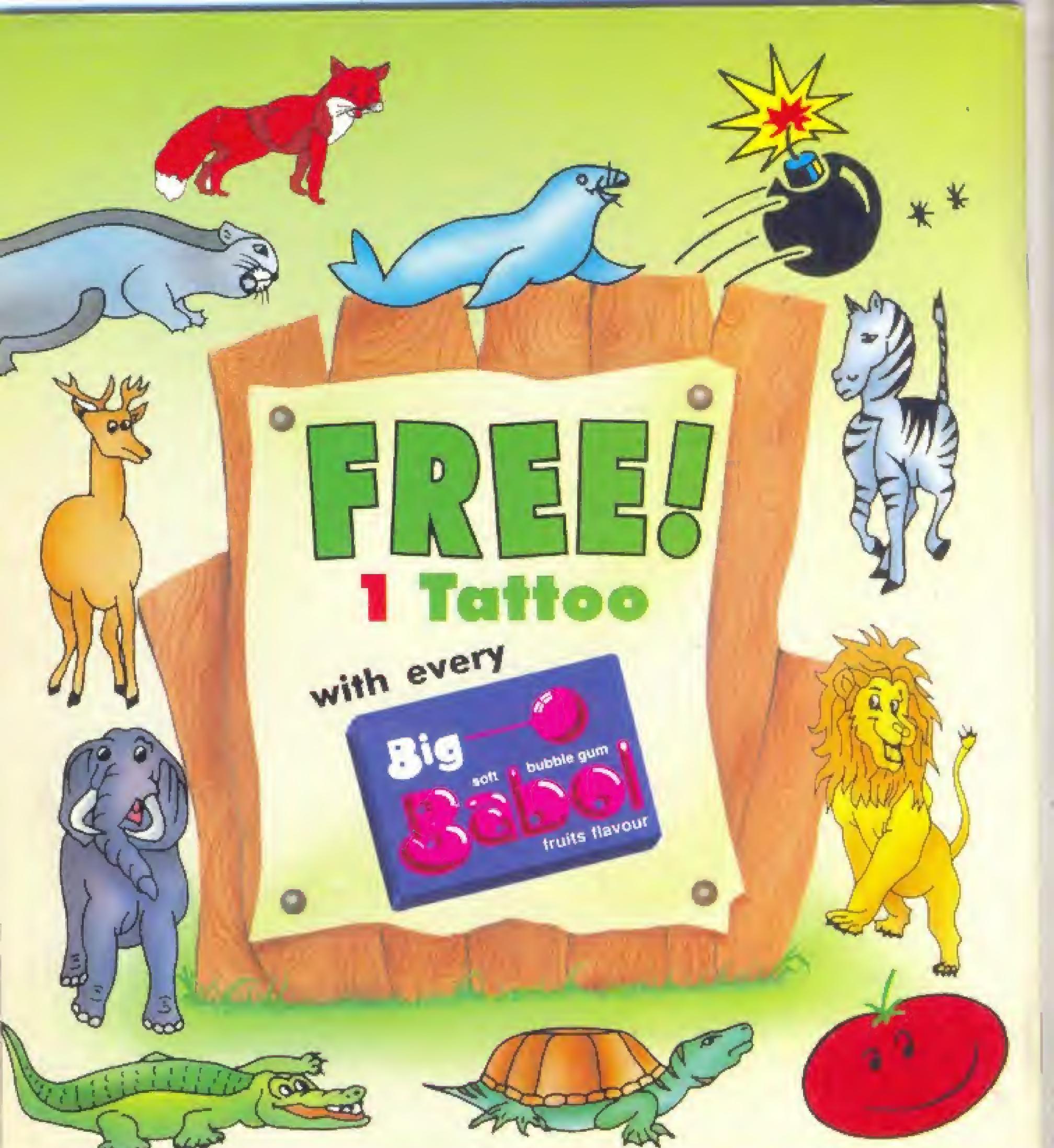


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HOW TO USE THE BIG BABOL TATTOO



Peel the yellow
protective paper.



Place the transfer
(front side up)
on the skin and
press down firmly.



Rub on top of the
transfer area with
any blunt object
for a few seconds.



Remove the top
layer.



See. You don't
even need water!